

# Worshipping the Ideal King

## On the Social Implications of Jaina Conversion Stories

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The differences between history, hagiology and mythology are deliberately blurred in Jaina (Jain) literature.<sup>2</sup> Not only biographies and universal histories, the *caritras* and *purāṇas*,<sup>3</sup> and monastic

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<sup>2</sup> See H. Jacobi, “Das Kālakācārya-Kathānakam”, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft* 34 (1880): 250; J. Hertel, “Die Erzählliteratur der Jains”, *Geist des Ostens* 1, 3–5 (Leipzig, 1913): 185f. (who designates *caritras* and *kathās* as “*Märchenromane*”); K. Bruhn, *Śīlāṅkas Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya: Ein Beitrag zur Kenntnis der Jaina-Universalgeschichte* (Hamburg, 1954): 114; J. E. Cort, “An Overview of the Jaina Purāṇas”, in: W. Doniger (ed.), *Purāṇa Perennis: Reciprocity and Transformation in Hindu and Jaina Texts* (Albany, 1993): 187f.; N. Balbir, “Formes et terminologie du narratif jaina ancien”, in: N. Balbir (ed.), *Genres littéraires en Inde* (Paris: Presses de l’Université de la Sorbonne Nouvelle, 1993) : 224f.; J. E. Cort, “Genres of Jain History”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 23 (1995): 477; etc.

<sup>3</sup> On the evolution and historical content of the various *itihāsa-purāṇa* genres in general, especially the historical biography or *caritra* (P. *carita*), see P. Hacker, “Purāṇen und Geschichte des Hinduismus: Methodologische, programmatische und geistesgeschichtliche Bemerkungen”, *Orientalistische Literaturzeitung* 55 (1960): 341–54; V. S. Pathak, *Ancient Histories of India* (Bombay: Asia Publishing, 1966); A. Dasgupta, “Biography: A Māyā? The Indian Point of Departure”, in: M.H. Zaidi (ed.), *Biography and Autobiography in Modern South Asian Regional Literatures* (Heidel-

chronicles and genealogies, the *sthavirāvalīs*, *paṭṭāvalīs* and *gurvāvalīs*,<sup>4</sup> mix or combine mythological tales with historical facts and eulogies, but also secular clan histories and genealogies, *vamsāvalīs* and *khyātas*,<sup>5</sup> and similar genres of history within the Jain tradition, such as narrative tales, *kathās*, or collections of stories, *prabandhas*,<sup>6</sup> epic poetry, *mahākāvya* or *rāsa*, or song, *gīta*, written in Prakrit, Sanskrit and vernacular languages. Although it contains numerous references to historical personalities, events, places and practices,<sup>7</sup> the

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berg, 1976): 4–17; K. K. Dasgupta, “Ancient Indian Biography”, in: S. P. Sen (ed.), *Historical Biography in Indian Literature* (Calcutta, 1979): 1–24; R. Thapar, “Social and Historical Consciousness: The Itihāsa-Purāṇa Tradition”, in: S. Bhattacharya & R. Thapar (eds.), *Situating Indian History* (Delhi, 1986): 353–83.

<sup>4</sup> On these genres of Jain history, see Cort, “Genres”, 480–90, and P. Flügel, “Protestantische und Post-Protestantische Jaina Reformbewegungen: Zur Geschichte und Organisation der Sthānakavāsī II”, *Berliner Indologische Studien* 15–17 (2003): 178–82, 194–6.

<sup>5</sup> See N. P. Ziegler, “The Seventeenth Century Chronicles of Mārvāra: A Study in the Evolution and Use of Oral Traditions in Western India”, *History in Africa* 3 (1976): 128–31 for further vernacular genres. *Khyāta* is related to Sanskrit *khyāti*, fame, renown, glory.

<sup>6</sup> M. Bloomfield, “On Recurring Psychic Motifs in Hindu Fiction”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 36 (1917b): 54f. describes the *br̥hat-kathās* as “secular fiction”, and the “Caritas or Prabandhas” as “quasi-chronicles” which are “invariably based upon the lives of real historical persons, mostly Jain saints, and emperors (cakravartins) and kings who were, or are said to have been votaries of the Jinistic faith. There is no question that they state some events that actually happened.” In his view, the *kathās* (P. *kahā*) or *kathānakas* “seem to differ from the Caritas in that they moralize more directly and obviously (dhammakahā), but they also are intimately connected with the traditional names of saints, emperors and kings” (ib.). See H. M. Johnson, “Kathā and Vṛttaka”, *Indian Antiquary* 56 (1927): 17 for the distinction between *kathās*, “adventures of men of former times”, *prabandhas*, “the biography of men of later times”, and *caritras*, “the biography of any one” (including the Jinas). On *prabandhas*, see also LPS; J. Deleu, “A Note on the Jain Prabandhas”, in: K. Bruhn & A. Wezler (eds.), *Studien zum Jainismus und Buddhismus: Gedenkschrift für Ludwig Alsdorf*. Alt und Neuindische Studien 23 (Wiesbaden, 1981): 61–72; P. Granoff, “Jain Biographies: Selections from the *Prabandhakośa*, *Kharataragacchabhṛhadgurvāvalī*, *Vṛddhācāryaprabandhāvalī*, and the *Ākhyānakamaṇikośa*”, in: P. Granoff (ed.) *The Clever Adulteress and other Stories: A Treasury of Jain Literature* (Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1990): 140–181. A. M. Ghatage, “Narrative Literature in Jain Māhārāṣṭrī”, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 16 (1935): 28 writes on *prabandhas*: “Though dealing with historical themes, their value for history is small, and the spirit of religious preaching dominates them throughout.”

<sup>7</sup> See J. Hertel, “Narrative Literature of the Jainas”, *Shrī Jain Shvetāmbar Conference Herald* 11 (1915): 227; J. Hertel, *On the Literature of the Shvetambaras of Gujarat* (Leipzig, 1922); J. C. Jain, *Life in Ancient India as Depicted in the Jain Canons* (Bombay, 1947), etc., on the importance of Jain narrative literature for the study of folklore.

value of Jain literature as a source for historical research is limited.<sup>8</sup> Two main reasons for this have been identified. Klaus Bruhn highlighted doctrinal imperatives underlying the general trend in Jain literature to systematically absorb the individual in the typical and the ideal.<sup>9</sup> The paradigmatic example is the diminishing interest in the individual life-history of Mahāvīra<sup>10</sup> in post-canonical biographies and universal histories, in contrast to the increasingly elaborate legends and myths surrounding the lives of the Buddha and of

<sup>8</sup> See Jacobi's, "Kālakācārya-Kathānakam", exemplary analysis of the historical contents of the Kālakācārya-Kathānakam, which identifies the marks of deliberate invention and reordering of the names in the *sthavirāvalis* etc. according to non-historiographical priorities: "In Legende und Sage werden Ereignisse und Personen der Geschichte und Mythe, wie im Traume nicht zusammengehörige Erlebnisse, zu einem neuen Bilde scheinbarer Wirklichkeit vereinigt. In beiden Fällen schliessen sich die ursprünglich isolierten oder anders geordneten Momente der Erinnerung des einzelnen sowie des Volkes nach den Gesetzen der Ideenassociation aneinander, dessen Wirkung nie im Voraus bestimmt werden kann, daher wir niemals die Wirklichkeit aus Traum oder Sage mit Sicherheit rekonstruieren können" (ib., p. 250). See also W. N. Brown, *The Story of Kālaka* (Washington: Smithsonian Institution Freer Gallery of Art, 1933). The unreliable nature of many Jain depictions of Indian chronological history has also been demonstrated by other authors. S. Jha, *Aspects of Brahmanical Influence on the Jaina Mythology* (Delhi, 1978): 118–52, for instance, showed that the depictions of the Ikṣvāku lineage in the Jain Purāṇas are derived from the Brāhmanical epics and *purāṇas*, and that what is original in them is based on "arbitrary alterations" (ib., p. 152). According to Dasgupta, "Ancient Indian Biography": 15, even inscriptions of early India "rarely narrate the events of the life of a king in a chronological order", while omitting facts and invariably observing the literary convention of bestowing "unqualified praise" on their heroes (ib., p. 19). Cf. M. M. Rahman, *Encyclopedia of Historiography* (New Delhi: Anmol Publications, 2006): 3f. who distinguishes between "history based on legends", such as the Kālakācārya-Kathānakam, and "historical events in legendary form", such as the Jaina *purāṇas*. Cf. H. M. Johnson's, "Historical References in Hemacandra's Mahāvīracaritra", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 45 (1925): 301–310, analysis of the "historical content" of Hemacandra's 12<sup>th</sup> c. *Mahāvīracaritra* in the TŚPC.

<sup>9</sup> Bruhn, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya*, 117f.; K. Bruhn, "Introduction to Śīlāṅka's Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya", in: A. M. Bhojak (ed.), *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariyam by Ācārya Śrī Śīlāṅka* (Ahmadabad, 1961): 12, 19. See also A. K. Warder, "Jaina Historiography and the Legend of Vikramāditya", in: *An Introduction to Indian Historiography* (Bombay, 1972): 36.

<sup>10</sup> On the early Mahāvīra biographies, excluding ĀS<sub>2</sub> 1.8.1, see Bruhn, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya*, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya*, 40–42, 115–17; Bruhn, "Introduction", 12–16; B. Bhatt, "Ācāra-Cūlās and -Niryukti. Studies II (Mahāvīra biography)", in: R. Smet & K. Watanabe (eds.), *Jain Studies in Honour of Jozef Deleu* (Tokyo, 1993): 85–121. Both conclude that "The biography itself is more legendary than historical" (p. 85).

Kṛṣṇa.<sup>11</sup> John E. Cort, on the other hand, pointed to the performative function of Jain historical texts in sectarian ceremonial contexts.<sup>12</sup>

Doctrinal clichés in Jain historical, biographical and hagiographical writing<sup>13</sup> are not only of dogmatic and stylistic significance, but also

<sup>11</sup> Following L. Alsdorf, *Harivaṃśapurāṇa* (Hamburg: Friedrichsen/de Gruyter, 1936), who distinguished Jaina “world history” and “universal history”, K. Bruhn, “Repetition in Jain Narrative Literature”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 37 defined Jaina “universal history”, somewhat paradoxically, in terms of “a definite mythological subject, the history of the sixty-three great men”. Cort, “Overview”, 195, first reiterated this definition, but later introduced the new but equally ambivalent term “localised history” (which echoes the “global / local” opposition), referring either to a specific text, sect, place, or person, to describe accounts of the lives of great personalities within particular sectarian traditions: “the histories of the Jain tradition in the centuries since the death and liberation of Mahāvīra” (Cort, “Genres”, 480, cf. 473, 479). Both definitions are both too specific and too vague for the general analysis of “historical narratives of great beings” (“social history” is outside the radar of Jain sources), and do not account for cosmological themes. P. Flügel, “The Unknown Loṅkā: Tradition and the Cultural Unconscious”, in: C. Caillat & N. Balbir (eds.), *Jaina Studies* (Delhi, 2008): 199, n. 72 therefore differentiated between “cosmological history”, “universal history”, as defined for the Jaina context by Bruhn, “sectarian history”, and “chronological history”.

<sup>12</sup> Cort, “Genres”, 480, 489f. See the paradigmatic study of P. Lutgendorf, *The Life of a Text: Performing the Rāmācāritmānas of Tulsidas* (Berkeley, 1991). In the Śvetāmbara tradition, the list of succession after Mahāvīra in the *Nandīsūtra* (NS<sub>1-2</sub> vv. 25–50) and the *paṭṭāvalī* of the specific monastic order are often recited at the occasion of initiation or *dīkṣā*. See Cort, “Genres”, 480; for other performative contexts: ib., pp. 489f. On the didactic and social functions of religious biographies and hero-tales see also J. C. Jain, *Prakṛit Narrative Literature: Origin and Growth* (New Delhi, 1981): 11 (morality) and Thapar, “Itihāsa-Purāṇa Tradition”, 378 (eulogy & legitimation), who introduced the distinction between ‘embedded’ (myth, epic, genealogy) and ‘disembedded’ (chronicles, biographies of persons of authority) forms of historical consciousness in South Asia, associating them respectively with ‘lineage’ and ‘state-based societies’ (ib., p. 354). See also Flügel, “Geschichte und Organisation”, 194–6 on the modern trend in centralized monastic orders of substituting conventional lineage histories with disembedded biographies of isolated individual great beings who transcend and potentially integrate several different lineages if serving as a common reference point. In the same way as genealogies, *gurvāvalīs*, are encompassed by succession lists, *paṭṭāvalīs*, succession lists are encompassed by “superbiographies” of selected monastic leaders who rule over several different monastic orders and hence cannot be pinned down to one single line of succession down to Mahāvīra. In cases such as this, lineage-history has to be suspended, and legitimacy established through direct reference to the principal sources of religious authority.

<sup>13</sup> Bruhn, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya*, 114f. distinguishes “historical data”, “legend” (motifs that are specific for a given text), and “hagiology” (motifs shared by similar texts), and studies their interrelation within one and the same *caritra* or *purāṇa*, weaving biographical, hagiographical and historiographical elements into systematically conceived textual wholes. He distinguishes furthermore between

function as rhetorical devices that are created and used with transformative intent. Notable is the didactic nature of most texts and their emphasis on transformative experiences such as conversion, renunciation and initiation.<sup>14</sup> From an observer's point of view, conversion experiences are predicated on the "realization and internalization of important dogmatic subjects",<sup>15</sup> for instance the ritual orientation towards the conventional list of the twenty-four Jinas or the sectarian lists of succession;<sup>16</sup> though this perspective cannot account for the 'self-reported' enlightenment experiences of the Jinas themselves, who allegedly formulated the core doctrines in the first place. The genre conventions of monastic biographies and didactic stories are easily blurred and deliberately fuzzy, since both follow the general tendency in Jain literature to absorb the individual in the typical, and to trigger moral transformation in the listener or reader, who is incited to line him/herself up behind the Jinas and their lineages of historical successors. The primary aim of Jain historiography is not the reporting of objective facts but religious transformation.<sup>17</sup>

This article investigates the ways in which conversion stories, at the heart of a wide variety of Jain narrative genres, seek to accomplish their aim to evoke in the listener the interiorisation of Jain values by way of identification with and imitation of the exemplary acts of the paradigmatic heroes of Jain history. The principal narrative technique is self-referentiality. Jain conversion stories generally relate how the act of narrating conversion-stories creates actual conversion experiences leading to monastic initiations. Communicative self-

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"historical biography" and "extended biography" (including previous and future lives). Cort, "Overview", 279 n. 4 questions the usefulness of the distinction between "biography" and "hagiography" altogether, but defines the Jaina *purāṇa* in a similar way as "a postcanonical biographical *kāvya* that has much overlap with the genre of story" (ib., p. 187f.).

<sup>14</sup> See Balbir, "Formes", 233 on the pragmatic orientation of *dharmakathās*; and P. Granoff, "Véronique Bouillier, Ascètes et Rois: Un Monastère de Kanphata Yogis au Nepal, Paris: CNRS Ethnologie, 1997", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27 (1999): 501 for the "marked emphasis on conversion" in (both Sufi and) Jain hagiographies, in the Jain *prabandhas* and *gacchāvalīs*.

<sup>15</sup> K. Bruhn "Five Vows and Six Avashyakas: The Fundamentals of Jaina Ethics". Ed. C. Geerdes, 1997–1998.

<http://here-now4u.de/eng/spr/religion/Bruhn.html.V.1> (Date of access 23.11.2009).

<sup>16</sup> Cort, "Genres", 490.

<sup>17</sup> For parallels in European classical antiquity, see A. Dihle, *Die Entstehung der historischen Biographie* (Heidelberg, 1987): 9 who stresses the difference between the great biography, which emerged in the contexts of ethical theory, and historiography.

referentiality, I argue, puts the audience into a double-bind situation<sup>18</sup> which under certain conditions may effect transformative experiences, especially in contexts such as the daily sermon in the morning assembly which mirror the narrative contexts related in the stories.<sup>19</sup>

This argument finds some support in the Jain scriptures themselves, which offer ample reflections on and prescriptions for the proper strategic uses of language.<sup>20</sup> According to the canonical text *Ṭhāṇa*<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.246, religious discourse, *kathā*, or more precisely: *dharmakathā*,<sup>21</sup> is of four kinds:<sup>22</sup>

<sup>18</sup> Cf. A. Whiteside, “The Double-Bind: Self-Referring Poetry”, in: A. Whiteside & M. Issacharoff (eds.), *On Referring in Literature* (Bloomington, 1987): 14–32.

<sup>19</sup> Amongst reported reasons for conversion amongst contemporary Terapanth mendicants: 7% of the respondents (11% male, 6% female) mentioned a pre-existing religious disposition and religious experiences, triggered by natural events, films, deities, and religious literature as a factor; 20% (33% male, 16% female) mentioned that they were attracted by a particular monk or nun. See P. Flügel, “Jain Monastic Life: A Quantitative Study of the Terāpanth Śvetāmbara Mendicant Order”, *Jaina Studies – Newsletter of the Centre of Jaina Studies* 4 (2009): 26.

<sup>20</sup> See Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 128ff.

<sup>21</sup> See H. Jacobi, “Introduction”, in: H. Jacobi (ed.), *Haribhadra. Samarāicca Kahā*. A Jaina Prakrit Work, vol. 1 (Calcutta, 1926): xviii ff. on Haribhadra’s division of Jain story literature in *artha-*, *kāma*, *saṃkīrṇa-*, and *dharma-kathā*, of three types of hearers: *tāmasa*, *rājasa* and *sāttvika*, and on the significance of the motif of karmic retribution or *nidāna* of bad *karman*.

<sup>22</sup> *cauvvihā kahā paṇṇattā, taṃ jahā – akkhevaṇī, vikkhevaṇī, saṃveyaṇī, nivvedaṇī [nivve(g)aṇī] ||246||*

(1) *akkhevaṇī kahā cauvvihā paṇṇattā, taṃ jahā – āyāra-akkhevaṇī, vavahāra-akkhevaṇī, paṇṇatti-akkhevaṇī, diṭṭhivāya-akkhevaṇī ||247||*

(2) *vikkhevaṇī kahā cauvvihā paṇṇattā, taṃ jahā – (i) sasamayaṃ kahei, sasamayaṃ kahittā parasamayaṃ kahei, (ii) parasamayaṃ kahettā sasamayaṃ ṭhāvattā bhavati, (iii) sammāvāyaṃ kahei, sammāvāyaṃ kahettā micchāvāyaṃ kahei, (iv) micchāvāyaṃ kahettā sammāvāyaṃ ṭhāvattā bhavati ||248||*

(3) *saṃveyaṇī kahā cauvvihā paṇṇattā, taṃ jahā – ihaloga-saṃveyaṇī, paraloga-saṃveyaṇī, āta-sarīra-saṃveyaṇī, para-sarīra-saṃveyaṇī ||249||*

(4) *nivvedaṇī kahā cauvvihā paṇṇattā, taṃ jahā –*

(i) *ihaloge ducchiṇṇā kammā ihaloge duhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti |*

(ii) *ihaloge ducchiṇṇā kammā paraloge duhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti,*

(iii) *paraloge ducchiṇṇā kammā ihaloge duhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti,*

(iv) *paraloge ducchiṇṇā kammā paraloge duhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti |*

(i) *ihaloge succiṇṇā kammā ihaloge suhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti |*

(ii) *ihaloge succiṇṇā kammā paraloge suhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti,*

[(iii) *paraloge succiṇṇā kammā ihaloge suhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti,*

(iv) *paraloge succiṇṇā kammā paraloge suhaphalavivāgasamjuttā bhavaṃti ] ||250|| (Ṭhāṇa<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.246–250)*

- (1) *ākṣepaṇī*: attracting the listener,<sup>23</sup>
- (2) *vikṣepaṇī*: establishing one's own religion after characterising others,<sup>24</sup>
- (3) *saṃvedanī*:<sup>25</sup> inspiring detachment by pointing to the deficiencies of the body,<sup>26</sup>
- (4) *nirvedanī*: inspiring indifference by enumerating the bitter and pleasant fruits of *karman*.<sup>27</sup>

Examples of the ways in which Jaina narratives try to attract the listener and the motif of the experience of deficiencies of the body for soteriological purposes will be discussed in part two of this article.

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<sup>23</sup> They are of four types: (1) Describing the attractive conduct of Jain mendicants and laity to the listeners. (2) Explaining the advantages and disadvantages of atonements. (3) Collecting and removing doubts. (4) Exposing the truth by adopting different standpoints according to the listeners'abilities (Ṭhāṇa<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.247). M. Ratnacandra (comp.), *Sacitra Ardhamāgadhi Kośa* (Delhi, 1923/1988): vol. 1: 62, defines *akkheva* (S. *ākṣepa*) as: "Stating one's doubts and objections as to the soundness of reasoned principle".

<sup>24</sup> They are of four types: (1) Stating one's own doctrine, and then stating other doctrines. (2) Stating first other doctrines, and then establishing one's own doctrine. (3) Stating first the right principles, and then the wrong principles. (4) Stating first the wrong principles, and then the right principles (Ṭhāṇa<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.248).

<sup>25</sup> Prakrit *saṃveyaṇī* is ambiguous. In Sanskrit it can be *saṃvedanī* and *saṃvegani*.

<sup>26</sup> They are of four types: (1) Pointing to the worthlessness and transient nature of human life. (2) Pointing to the worthlessness and transient nature of forms of existence in other worlds (gods, hell-beings, animals and plants). (3) Pointing to the impurity of one's own body. (4) Pointing to the impurity of others' bodies (Ṭhāṇa<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.249).

<sup>27</sup> They are of four types [actually eight]: (1) Pointing to the bitter fruits in this life of bad *karman* acquired in this life. (2) Pointing to the bitter fruits in the next life of bad *karman* acquired in this life. (3) Pointing to the bitter fruits in this life of bad *karman* acquired in the past life. (4) Pointing to the bitter fruits in the next life of bad *karman* acquired in the past life. (1) Pointing to the pleasant fruits in this life of good *karman* acquired in this life. (2) Pointing to the pleasant fruits in the next life of good *karman* acquired in this life. (3) Pointing to the pleasant fruits in this life of good *karman* acquired in the past life. (4) Pointing to the pleasant fruits in the next life of good *karman* acquired in the past life (Ṭhāṇa<sub>1-2</sub> 4.2.250).

## 1 The Rhetoric of Jaina Conversion Stories<sup>28</sup>

The Śvetāmbara Jain story literature – in particular the medieval *kathās*, *prabandhas* and *caritras* which elaborate older doctrinal and narrative clichés for purposes of religious edification and propaganda (*prabhāvanā*)<sup>29</sup> – has been described as a mixture of poetry, *alaṃkāra*, and religious treatise, *sūtra*,<sup>30</sup> in which “the śāstric pill is to be sugared with poetry for the benefit of those who are unable to swallow it as it is”.<sup>31</sup> Jacobi already pointed out that most stories also contain historical information, albeit of questionable validity which has to be established through triangulation in each and every case.<sup>32</sup> Hence, in the main, modern scholars have studied Jain narrative literature in a

<sup>28</sup> I use the word ‘conversion’ here in the conventional sense, used by translators of Jain texts to describe references to events of spiritual insight, *samyag-darśana* or *samyaktva*. Cf. P. S. Jaini, *The Jaina Path of Purification* (Berkeley, 1979): 134–56. Since Jainism is not an exclusive movement but a ‘religion of the individual’ which can coexist with different types of ‘group religions’, there are no Jain equivalents to the English common-sense meaning of the word conversion, which primarily refers the entry into a social institution, like the Christian ‘church’. Jains use a wide variety of words expressing the temporary experience of a spiritual transformation, e.g. *vairāgya*, indifference to the world, *saṃvega*, agitation leading to disenchantment, *pratibuddha*, awakening, *pratyekabodhi*, enlightenment by a tributary cause (often wrongly rendered enlightenment by oneself according to J.C. Wright [personal communication]), or *bodhita*, enlightenment through instruction. Cf. M. Bloomfield, “The Śālibhadra Carita: A Story of Conversion to Jaina Monkhhood”, *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 43 (1923): 275 referring to Tattvārtha-sūtra (TS) 10.7; J. Charpentier, *Studien zur indischen Erzählliteratur I: Paccakabuddhageschichten* (Uppsala, 1908). Conversion in the emphatic sense is not primarily predicated on cognitive ‘insight’ and acceptance of the ‘rightness’ of Jain doctrine, but on the ‘direct experience’ of the soul/self, provoking changes in behavior. For depictions of ‘total’ transformations through the influence of Jain monks, see L. A. Babb, “Monks and Miracles: Religious Symbols and Images of Origin among Osval Jains”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 52, 1 (1993): 11. Cf. Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 91, n. 20f.

<sup>29</sup> “The Śvetāmbara monks used these stories as the most effective means of spreading their doctrines amongst their countrymen and developed a real art of narratives in all ... languages” (Hertel, *Literature*, 6). See also A. N. Upadhye, “Prakrit Studies: Their Literary and Philosophical Value”, in: K. R. Chandra (ed.), *Proceedings of the Seminar on Prakrit Studies (1973)* (Ahmedabad, 1978): xvii; J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 38.

<sup>30</sup> M. Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur. Zweiter Band. Die buddhistische Literatur und die heiligen Texte der Jainas* (Leipzig, 1920): 317; K. K. Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka and Indian Culture* (Sholapur, 1949/1968): 12; C. M. Mayrhofer, “Tradition and Innovation in Jain Narratives. A Study of Two Apabhraṃśa Versions of the Story of Cāruḍatta”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 165.

<sup>31</sup> Somadeva (YC), in Handiqui *Yaśastilaka*, 14.

<sup>32</sup> Jacobi, “Kālakācārya-Kathānakam”, 250.



de-contextualized manner; disregarding the fact that stories, particularly historical biographies, are still widely used by Jain mendicants as examples, *dr̥ṣṭānta*, illustrating the main message of their sermons, *pravacana*.<sup>33</sup> Biographical narratives are also a popular vehicle for the transmission of religious knowledge in Jain households.<sup>34</sup> Amongst modern scholars, Phyllis Granoff<sup>35</sup>, Nalini Balbir<sup>36</sup> and Lawrence Babb<sup>37</sup> emphasised the importance of narratives, particularly miracle stories, for stimulating actual conversion, *pratibodhi*, towards a Jain world-view or the decision to renounce the world. However, the ways in which Jain religious narratives seek to accomplish their desired end, and the question why medieval stories still resonate with audiences today, are yet to be investigated.

### 1.1 Strange Loops

I will address these questions in three steps. First, I delimit the general rhetorical strategy of these stories, then analyze two popular conversion stories, and finally investigate implied conditions of their efficacy. I focus on conversion stories, that is, stories which deal with transformative experiences of religious insight, *samyag-darśana* or *samyaktva*,<sup>38</sup> because, in my view, they have a unique capacity to exert influence on their audience by inducing in the mind what Hofstadter calls a self-reinforcing “strange loop” between narrative context and performative context.<sup>39</sup> Conversion stories employ a type

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<sup>33</sup> See M. Thiel-Horstmann “Dādūpanthī Sermons”, in: R.K. Barz & M. Thiel-Horstmann (ed.), *Living Texts from India* (Wiesbaden, 1989): 141–183 on this “central rhetoric strategy in India” (p. 154), on creating insight (p. 144), and the dependency of performance on textual models (p. 153).

<sup>34</sup> See B. K. Jain, “Ethics and Narrative Literature in the Daily Life of a Traditional Jaina Family of Agra During the Nineteen Thirties. A Study Based on my Personal Childhood Reminiscences”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 175–182.

<sup>35</sup> P. Granoff, “The Biographies of Siddhasena. A Study in the Texture of Allusion and the Weaving of a Group-Image (Part I)”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 17, 4 (1989): 329–384.

<sup>36</sup> See Balbir, “Formes”, 261 on “la force persuasive d’un genre qui invite l’auditeur à une participation active”.

<sup>37</sup> Babb, “Monks and Miracles”, 11.

<sup>38</sup> See J. Deleu, *Viyāhapannatti (Bhagavāi)* (Brugge, 1970): 40–44, 353 for references to exemplary Jain conversion stories, “scil. conversions of such persons as are representative of the different classes of people addressed by Mahāvira” (ib., p. 40), which became clichés for the later Jain story literature.

<sup>39</sup> D. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: An Eternal Golden Band* (London, 1979/1980): 10.

of narrative reflexivity which is known as ‘enunciative’ or ‘communicative self-reference’, where “the text deals with its own communicative context, its function, the presuppositions of his narration, and ... has thus its own communicative situation as its topic.”<sup>40</sup> Scripted Jain stories can refer to their communicative contexts only in a general way, that is, per analogy, by describing the efficacy of a conversion story that is narrated in a similar social context as the scripted story itself. The typical setting for didactic stories is the sermon of a monk or nun at the morning assembly or *samavasaraṇa*. Speakers who invoke such scripted or orally transmitted stories in a specific context also usually address the potential performative functions of their own utterances only indirectly. The strange loop, if it manifests at all, is not generated by the text or the speaker, but by the listener. Communication-induced transformative insight is triggered in the mind of a self-observing listener only if his/her real life experience resonates with the narrated experience of the literary character. The fact that the listener to a religious discourse finds him/herself in a conventional speech situation,<sup>41</sup> a sermon, which mirrors the situation described in the text facilitates identification with the conversion experience narrated in the story and provokes self-reflection. Thus, the phenomenon to be analysed is the performative function of narrative self-reference, that is, the oblique indexicality of a genre of self-referential texts which describe per analogy their own potential function to evoke the desired insight in the mind of a listener placed in a social setting of the same type as the one described by the text itself.

Jain stories often narrate experiences of kings or merchants, who, through a sudden and only temporary dissociation, *nirjarā*, of *karman*, ‘break through the veil of false appearances’ and gain insight, *samyag-darśana*, into the inherent qualities of their inner soul, *jīva*, a substance representing the only ground of certainty.<sup>42</sup> Compared to their ‘Hindu’ counterparts, Jain (conversion) stories appear realistic, pragmatic and un-poetic.<sup>43</sup> They deny, as a rule, super-

<sup>40</sup> W. Nöth, “Self-Reference in the Media: The Semiotic Framework”, in: W. Nöth & N. Bishara (ed.), *Self-Reference in the Media*. Berlin, 2007): 20.

<sup>41</sup> See D. Hymes, “Models of the Interaction of Language and Social Life”, in: J. J. Gumperz & D. Hymes (eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication* (New York, 1972): 56 on this term.

<sup>42</sup> Cf. Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 134–56; Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”, 346ff., 359.

<sup>43</sup> Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur*, 305, 342; Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka*, 55; J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 27; etc.

natural intervention into human affairs and stress the responsibility of the individual for its own fate.<sup>44</sup> The prime purpose of Jain stories, including histories, is didactic. Jain stories do not merely want to inform, entertain<sup>45</sup> or edify<sup>46</sup> the Jain community, but also to demonstrate the explanatory power, the usefulness and effectiveness of Jain religious principles in everyday-life contexts, and hence to influence their audience to embrace Jainism.

It is because of the ascetic's long-term intention to provoke changes in the actual behaviour of their audiences that Jain narratives can and must be studied not only as poetry but also as instruments of persuasion. The hypothesis guiding the following discussion is that the narration of conflicts and violence is used in conversion stories as an essential rhetorical device for the effective communication of the Jain principles of non-violence.<sup>47</sup> The structure of the conflicts between the pivotal characters is focal and often carefully constructed in such a way as to reverberate with life experiences of their intended audience.<sup>48</sup>

## 1.2 Allusion and Malapropism

The rhetorical practices of Jain ascetics, who delicately manipulate and influence, *prabhāvita*, members of society to support their religion, are not only historically documented, but also a well-known motif of Jain literature and doctrine. The *Bhavisattakaha* (BK), a tenth-century Apabhraṃśa text written by the Jain layman Dhaṇapāla, for instance, after narrating the previous lives of the hero with a focus on the karmic consequences of previous actions, culminates in the description of the effect of the sermon of the monk Vimalabuddhi on king Bhaviṣyadatta, who is shaken by it to such an extent that he resolves to become a monk.<sup>49</sup> The *Līlavatīsārā* (LS) of Jinaratnasūri, composed in Sanskrit

<sup>44</sup> Bruhn, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurisacariya*, 118.

<sup>45</sup> J. G. Bühler, *The Life of Hemacandrācārya* (Santinikata, 1889/1936): 3f.

<sup>46</sup> C. H. Tawney, *The Wishing Stone of Narratives. Merutunga's Prabhandhacintāmaṇi* (Calcutta, New Series, N. 931, 1899/1901): vi.

<sup>47</sup> See Flügel, "Power and Insight", for an outline of a socio-linguistic approach towards Jain literature.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. R. J. Zydenbos, "The Jaina Nun Kavunti", *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes* 5 (1987): 407, 388.

<sup>49</sup> Chapter 18–21. See H. Jacobi (ed.), *Bhavisatta Kahā von Dhanavāla: Eine Jaina-Legende in Apabhraṃśa*. Abhandlungen der Königlich Bayrischen Akademie der Wissenschaften. Philosophisch-philologische und historische Klasse XXIX Band, 4. Abhandlung (München, 1918): 21.

in 1285 C.E., is another example of the numerous Jain narratives in which the motif of conversion due to an insight inducing sermons plays a central role.<sup>50</sup> The famous ‘conversion’ of the historical Chaulukya king Kumārapāla (r. 1143–1172) through a sermon of Hemacandrasūri (1089–1173) is depicted in Merutuṅga’s fourteenth-century *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* (PCM) as the result of a carefully devised long-term strategy of the *ācārya*,<sup>51</sup> who says to himself:

A man must be a king in his own right, or he must get some king under his influence. But there is no other way by which human beings can attain their ends.<sup>52</sup>

Merutuṅga narrates at length the rhetorical tricks which Hemacandra supposedly used to convert the king to practice Jainism without openly challenging his stern belief in Śaivism, the dominant religion of most royal families in Hindu India. The *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* explicitly talks about the “use of words intentionally ambiguous”<sup>53</sup> by Jain ascetics who wish to achieve their aim to promote Jainism.<sup>54</sup>

Modern scholars, such as Bruhn,<sup>55</sup> Balbir<sup>56</sup> and Granoff,<sup>57</sup> identi-

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<sup>50</sup> In his review of the translation by R. C. C. Fynes, *The Epitome of Queen Līlavatī by Jinaratna* (New York, 2005), J. E. Cort, “An Epitome of Medieval Śvetāmbara Jain Literary Culture: A Review and Study of Jinaratnasūri’s *Līlavatīsāra*”, *International Journal of Jaina Studies (Online)* 5, 1 (2009): 5f. summarised the technique attributed to Mahāvīra’s disciple Sudharman in the text: “In addition, he not only unmasked the karmic past, oftentimes a frightening one, of a person in the king’s midst, his sermon awakened in the perpetrator an understanding of his past lives (*jāti-smaraṇa*). The person had a sudden shock of recognition of what he had done in past lives, why he was in his current situation, and therefore who he really was. The only proper response to this spiritual awakening, to this conversion experience, is to renounce the world and become a Jain mendicant. As we read of one such person, ‘having given intent and proper reflection upon the teacher’s relation . . . [and] the glory of the memory of his former lives suddenly arisen in him because the king of reverend doctors had related it all truly,’ he beseeched Sudharman, ‘Lord, rescue me at once from the ocean of crookedness,’ and received initiation as a monk at Sudharman’s lotus feet (Vol. 1, p. 363). Each of the relevant chapters therefore ends with this triumphant event.”

<sup>51</sup> Bühler, *Life of Hemacandrācārya*, 23f.; PCM p. xix.

<sup>52</sup> PCM p. 124.

<sup>53</sup> PCM p. 52.

<sup>54</sup> At many places, the PCM gives clear indications of the popularity of ‘off-record’ strategies amongst ascetics. See P. Brown and S. Levinson, “Universals in Language Usage: Politeness Phenomena”, in: E. Goody (ed.), *Question and Politeness* (Cambridge, 1978): 73–5.

<sup>55</sup> Bruhn, *Cauppaṇṇamahāpurīśacariya*, 114ff.; Bruhn, “Repetition”, 27–75.

<sup>56</sup> N. Balbir, “Normalizing Trends in Jaina Narrative Literature”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 12 (1984): 25–37.

fied general rhetorical features of medieval Jain story literature, which, on the whole, was not very innovative, but relied on the appropriation and strategic reinterpretation of popular folklore and older brāhmanical literature, as previous scholars had pointed out.<sup>58</sup> Following Winternitz,<sup>59</sup> many authors highlighted the method of *Verballhornung* as characteristic for Jain versions of popular literature.<sup>60</sup> Balbir followed the standard English translation of the word as ‘bowl-derization’, that is, the ways in which “passages considered indecent or indelicate are expurgated”.<sup>61</sup> However, in the present case the word is better translated as ‘malapropism’, that is, deliberate or tendentious corruption. Balbir herself notices puzzling ‘counter-examples’ and a prevalence of references to violence and conflict in Jain literature:

The focus on narratives connected with hiṃsā is not the result of a deliberate choice; it is undoubtedly a recurring difficult point, though certainly not the only one.<sup>62</sup>

Granoff similarly argued that the Śvetāmbara authors of medieval Jain miracle stories deliberately refrain from references to conflicts and philosophical arguments in order to avoid sectarian divisions, but instead use the methods of ‘repetition of familiar stories’ and ‘allusion’ as key devices for the fabrication of an ‘all-integrative group image’ with an appeal to a wide audience of believers.<sup>63</sup> It is, however, apparent that even the somewhat polemical miracle story of the conversion of Kumārapāla in the *Prabandhacintāmaṇi* does not fit into a theory of the social function of non-controversial imagery for the Śvetāmbara group-integration.<sup>64</sup> It would seem that one cannot understand the apparent contradiction between a religion propagat-

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<sup>57</sup> Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”, 329–84.

<sup>58</sup> See E. Leumann, “Beziehungen der Jaina-Literatur zu anderen Literaturkreisen Indiens”, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes* (Leiden, 1885): 530; H. Jacobi, *Ausgewählte Erzählungen in Māhārāshtrī* (Leipzig, 1886): xix–xx; Hertel, *Literature*, 9; J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 11; C. Caillat, “Introduction to Jaina Canonical and Narrative Literature”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 17.

<sup>59</sup> Winternitz, *Geschichte der indischen Literatur*, 303.

<sup>60</sup> E.g., Alsdorf, *Harivaṃśapurāṇa*, 119.

<sup>61</sup> Balbir, “Normalizing Trends”, 25.

<sup>62</sup> *Ib.*, p. 37.

<sup>63</sup> Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”, 337. Similarly: M. Carrithers, *Why Do Humans Have Culture?* (Oxford, 1992); Babb, “Monks and Miracles”, 3–21.

<sup>64</sup> Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”, 380, n. 39; 383f., n. 61f. For the general sociological problem, see the general criticism of Durkheimian and Parsonian variants of functionalism.

ing absolute non-violence and its own vast body of religious literature prominently depicting acts of violence by studying only the stories themselves from a perspective of doctrinal hermeneutics. One has to take into account the social uses of these stories in ritualized contexts of sermons and debates for the promulgation of the creed, and to investigate their social implications and functions to appreciate the apparently inappropriate depiction of acts of conflict and violence in the chosen narratives. “The essential element”, J.C. Jain suggested, “is the narrator-audience relationship which takes a literary form in the course of time, becoming didactic due to the new demands of the social situation.”<sup>65</sup>

The importance of widely used poetic techniques such as malapropism and allusion (which I see as intrinsically interconnected in the cases at hand) has often been highlighted. However, the main difficulty involved in understanding the rhetoric of medieval Jain stories – the necessary element of symbolic violence in rhetoric and the role of narrations of conflict in Jain stories – is yet to be addressed.<sup>66</sup> The following suggestion is but one step towards a solution of this conundrum. The key rhetorical strategy of Jain moral tales, I argue, is the intentional construction and ‘exploitation’ of conversational implicatures for the purpose of evoking experiences of insight, *samyag-darśana*, or conversion, *pratibodhi*, through techniques of defamiliarization,<sup>67</sup> displacement, and the violation of expectations,<sup>68</sup> as analyzed by psychoanalysis, philosophical pragmatism<sup>69</sup> and

<sup>65</sup> J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 11.

<sup>66</sup> On the role of violence in Jain discourse, see also P. Granoff, “The Violence of Non-Violence: A Study of Some Jain Responses to Non-Jain Religious Practices”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 15, 1 (1992): 1–43; M. Monius, “Love, Violence, and the Aesthetics of Digust: Śaivas and Jains in Medieval South India”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 32 (2004): 113–172; P. Dundas, “The Non-Violence of Violence: Jain Perspectives on Warfare, Asceticism and Worship”, in: J. R. Hinnells & R. King (eds.), *Religion and Violence in South Asia: Theory and Practice* (London, 2007): 41–61; Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 103ff.

<sup>67</sup> “Somadeva speaks of the great transmuting power of poetry. The true poets are those whose words make familiar things unfamiliar and unfamiliar things familiar” (Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka*, 14).

<sup>68</sup> Cf. Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka*, 349, 368; V. M. Kulkarni, *A Treasury of Tales* (Ahmedabad, 1994). The second revised edition of Dundas’, *The Jains* (London, 2002): 101 also states that medieval exemplary stories are “intended to destabilise any fixed sense of social and familial identity and so ease the individual’s path into a spiritual journey in which such ties have to be abandoned.”

<sup>69</sup> J. L. Austin, *How to Do Things with Words* (Oxford, 1962); P. Grice, “Logic and Conversation”, in: P. Cohen & J. L. Morgan (eds.), *Syntax and Semantics*, vol. 3 (London, 1975): 41–58; etc.

sociolinguistics.<sup>70</sup> It cannot be the principal aim of Jain ascetics to use ‘allusions’ in order to incorporate as many facets of life as possible, rather than promoting their doctrine in such a way as to achieve pragmatic effects. In the next section I will discuss the ways in which the telling of a story focusing on violence and its potential psychological and social consequences may be connected. But first I need to clarify what I see as the core strategy of Jain narratives – the frequently reported prevalence of intentionally polyvalent language usage<sup>71</sup> and the technique of disguising moral teachings in the cloak of popular story motifs.<sup>72</sup>

### 1.3 Deep Meaning and Symbolic Violence

I interpret the use of allusions in Jain narratives not as means for achieving social harmony, but as a preliminary rhetoric device intended to generate conversational cooperation to be subsequently exploited by *Verballhornung* and similar rhetorical strategies. In order to influence an often entirely unfamiliar audience, the mendicant, the paradigmatic narrator, needs to establish first a common ground between speaker (writer) and hearer (reader). This is usually done with the help of allusions to common-places (familiar situations, stories, typical social conflicts etc.) which will involve the audience and attract emotional commitment. Only if a relationship of cooperation between speaker and audience is established can second order processes of manipulation and ‘flouting’ of this relationship be potentially effective. Poetic techniques such as the displacement or malapropism of words or symbolical language can only be pragmatically successfully when the linguistic communication is embedded in a pre-established process of (conversational) interaction.<sup>73</sup> Filliozat rightly stressed that

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<sup>70</sup> J. J. Gumpertz & D. Hymes (eds.), *Directions in Sociolinguistics: The Ethnography of Communication* (New York, 1972); etc. Cf. J. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*. 2 vols. (Frankfurt/M., 1980–1981).

<sup>71</sup> R. Williams, *Jaina Yoga* (Delhi, 1963/1983): xvii–xix.

<sup>72</sup> Hertel, *Literature*, 9.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*; S. Moscovici, “Social Influence and Conformity”, in: G. Lindzey & E. Aronson (eds.), *The Handbook of Social Psychology*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., vol. 2 (New York, 1985): 347–412; I. Strecker, *The Social Practice of Symbolization* (London, 1988); P. Drechsel, *Sozialstruktur und kommunikatives Handeln* (Münster, 1994); etc.

This kind of literary narration, meant first to catch the attention and then to preach for conversion, is not peculiar to Jaina literature, but is common to many religious works of edification in India.<sup>74</sup>

However, which conversational opener and type of story will be chosen in a given situation depends to a large extent on the prevalent 'conditions of acceptability' in a particular audience, which indirectly determine the range of possible rhetorical strategies.<sup>75</sup> The choice of didactic narratives by Jain ascetics needs to reflect the social ethos that is predominant in a given 'speech situation'. Like all trained orators, Jain monks learn to carefully assess their audience,<sup>76</sup> and tend to choose and change universally popular themes and stories<sup>77</sup> in order to be able to address and exploit or transform the sentiments of the masses.<sup>78</sup>

Once conversational cooperation is established, intentional multivocal language can be potentially successfully used, usually at the end of a narrative, for achieving either purely aesthetic or (eventually) psychological effects (e.g. insight or conversion). The principal type of intentional multivocality, the relationship between deceptive surface meaning and hidden truth, informing Jain narratives, I argue, is rooted in Jain ontological dualism. The projection of the categories of Jain doctrinal dualism generates an effect which may be called 'onto-

<sup>74</sup> J. Filliozat, "The Jaina Narrative Literature in South India and its Counterparts", *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 99.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. W. Iser, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach", *New Literary History* 3, 2 (1972): 279–299; D. E. Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual in Colonial India: The Shaping of a Public Culture in Surat City, 1852–1928* (Berkeley, 1991): 24.

<sup>76</sup> See *Āyāradasāo* 4.2, quoted in N. Tatia & Muni Mahendra Kumar, *Aspects of Jaina Monasticism* (Ladnun, 1981): 32.

<sup>77</sup> Especially the *Bṛhatkathā*, according to J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 138.

<sup>78</sup> The audience of Jain texts is not specified and embraces potentially the whole of humanity. Jain authors have wisely chosen issues of domestic and local conflict (jealous neighbours, greedy rulers, unfaithful wives, evil brothers etc.) as take-off points of their stories, thus alluding to the near universal human desire for domestic peace, and reassuring themselves of the emotional appeal of their narration to any audience. This typical opening move simultaneously forces the implication of a more general opposition between the conflict-ridden householder and the non-violent renouncer onto the audience. In fact, most of the Jain stories are constructed in such a way, as to reveal the initially presented domestic struggles retrospectively as mere surface phenomena (karmic effects), which are determined by the underlying opposition between desire and renunciation (cf. Hertel, *Literature*, 6). To begin a story with domestic issues thus enables a Jain author or narrator to reinterpret the beginning of the story in the light of the insight gained at the end, which in the story will inevitably lead to an act of renunciation.



logical ambiguity': the distinction between surface meaning and deep meaning, which has the potential to infuse any given preconception or common sense assumption with an element of uncertainty. In other words, the underlying intentionality informing the rhetoric of Jain conversion stories is ultimately Jain ontology itself.

Intentional multivocality was already identified as a universal characteristic of Jain narrative literature by authors such as Hertel,<sup>79</sup> J.C. Jain,<sup>80</sup> and others. Often, they noted, Jain narratives apparently do not mean what they say, or, the other way round, what they say is not what they really mean.<sup>81</sup> This phenomenon has been described in terms of a 'disguise' of the general strategic aim of religious conversion under the mantle of entertainment. Mone, for instance, concludes with regard to the *Kīcaka*-episode in the Jain *Mahābhārata*:

Thus preaching on religion and its ethic and popularising the doctrine is the only purpose of the author, as revealed through his story. Under the guise of tale-telling, there appears moral and life-regulating precepts – this so happens in every such Jaina narrative.<sup>82</sup>

A good example of this general rhetorical strategy of Jain narratives – to disguise religious meanings with a worldly plot – is the frequent use of love stories, *kāma kathā*, to attract the attention of an audience. The obvious problem, as J.C. Jain notes, is that the surface content of love stories cannot possibly be in concordance with the underlying religious intentions of Jainism, nor with the merchant ethos of most Jain families:

Since the Jains were always a mercantile community, and therefore were more attracted to stories relating to wealth, the above literary emphasis on artha is understandable. What is more problematic is why so many Jain stories are so rich in the theme of *kāma* or romantic love.<sup>83</sup>

The pragmatic reason for using love stories is of course first to attract the attention of the listeners and then to infuse them with moral

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<sup>79</sup> Hertel, *Literature*, 9.

<sup>80</sup> J. C. Jain, "The Importance of Vasudevahiṇḍī", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens* 19 (1975): 105f. See also J. C. Jain, "Stories of Trading Merchants and Vasudevahiṇḍī", *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 55, 1–4 (1974): 73–81.

<sup>81</sup> Cf. D. S. Ruegg's, "Purport, Implicature and Presupposition: Sanskrit *Abhipraya* and Tibetan *Dgons Pa/Dgons Gzi* as Hermeneutical Concepts", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 13, 4 (1985): 313 reflections on Tibetan materials.

<sup>82</sup> N. N. Mone, "A Jaina View of Kīcaka-Episode in the Mahābhārata", *All-India Oriental Conference Ahmedabad 1985* (1987): 324.

<sup>83</sup> J. C. Jain, "Vasudevahiṇḍī", 104.

insight. Love stories are just a disguise for the transmission of Jain doctrines: a sweet coating of the bitter pill of morality. However, “Sometimes the disguise is so good ... that the moral or teaching element ... is difficult to find”.<sup>84</sup>

The structural relationship between surface meaning (phenomenal appearance) and disguised meaning (noumenal essence) is in Jainism always interpreted in terms of the ontology of *jīva* and *ajīva*. *Jīva*, the true inner essence of things, is hidden under the external guise of its karmic shackles. Truth, according to Jainism, can be found hidden under the fetters of untruth, like the soul in the body, the gold in the rock, the lotus in the mud, the king amongst the people, etc. Popular narratives are conceived in similar ways as ‘vehicles’ for the communication of Jain principles which constitute their underlying eternal ‘truth’.

In Jain philosophical terms,<sup>85</sup> the general rhetoric strategy employed by Jain ascetics is the juxtaposition of the perspectives of the worldly or conventional point of view, *vyavahāra-naya* (VN), and the transcendental point of view, *pāramārthika-naya* (PN),<sup>86</sup> in such a way, that the commonsensical perception of the surface meaning of a story or event is progressively altered as the story unfolds through the confrontation with the point of view of the omniscient Jinas conveyed by Jain ascetics and their retrospective interpretations of the *karmic* consequences of earlier actions of the pivotal characters.<sup>87</sup>

Most Jain narratives exploit the implications of the Jain *karman* theory by narrating in which ways *karman* accumulated in a previous existence bears fruit in the next, the so called *avadāna* motif.<sup>88</sup> The popular *nidāna* stories are a subcategory of *avadāna* stories. They illustrate the negative consequences of bad *karman*, accrued for

<sup>84</sup> J. C. Jain, “Vasudevahiṇḍi”, 106. The motif of disguise itself figures prominently in Jain stories; for instance, the disguise of king Kumārapāla as a Śaivite ascetic (PCM, p. 116).

<sup>85</sup> Though the terms are Jain, the interpretation is my own.

<sup>86</sup> On the religious role of these two perspectives in Jainism, see for instance B. Bhatt, “Vyavahāra-Naya and Niścaya-Naya in Kundakunda’s Works”, *Zeitschrift der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft (Supplement II)*, ed. W. Voigt (Wiesbaden, 1974): 279–191; W. Johnson, “The Religious Function of Jaina Philosophy: Anekāntavāda Reconsidered”, *Religion* 25 (1995): 41–50; Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 133ff.

<sup>87</sup> SKC; AK; etc. Cf. Ruegg, “Purport, Implicature and Presupposition”, 317; Zydenbos “The Jaina Nun Kavunti”; J. Ryan, “Erotic Excess and Sexual Danger in the *Civakacintāmaṇi*”, in: J. E. Cort (ed.), *Open Boundaries: Jain Communities and Culture in Indian History* (Albany, 1998): 77.

<sup>88</sup> Bloomfield, “The Śālibhadra Carita”, 260.

instance by performing penance for worldly gains,<sup>89</sup> or how two or more protagonists are “held in relation to one another by the tie of love or hatred through a succession of parallel births.”<sup>90</sup>

#### 1.4 Social Implication

This retrospective mode of interpretation operates in a similar way as the expiatory Jain rituals of self-retrospection, *pratikramaṇa*, of which, one might argue, Jain conversion stories are but a reflexive form.<sup>91</sup> Similar to *pratikramaṇa* rites, retrospection as a narrative motif or technique creates reflective distance and enables the discrimination and objectification of elements of ‘*karmic delusion*’ and their separation from the ‘true nature of the self’. The process of reflexive differentiation of *karman* and *jīva* is predicated on the analysis of the different outcomes of actions informed by worldly orientations (VN) and transcendental orientations (PN), through the comparison of consequences and antecedences of actions from the objective point of view of a quasi-omniscient narrator.<sup>92</sup> In this way,

<sup>89</sup> Uttarādhyayana-sūtra (Utt<sub>2</sub>) 13.28.

<sup>90</sup> J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 55.

<sup>91</sup> On the link between Jain ritual and story literature, see also P. Granoff, “Being in the Minority: Medieval Jain Reactions to other Religious Groups”, in: N. N. Bhattacharyya (ed.), *Jainism and Prakrit in Ancient and Medieval India* (New Delhi, 1994): 37.

<sup>92</sup> See A. Jaffe’s, *Vanishing Points: Dickens, Narrative and the Subject of Omniscience* (Berkeley, 1991): 4, perceptive observations on the analogy between an omniscient being and the creator of modern fiction, in terms of the capacity to enter a character’s consciousnesses (Seymour Chatman), which equally apply to Jain narrative literature: “Knowledge appears to us only in opposition to its absence; an effect of unboundedness is created in contrast to one of limitation. Thus when omniscient narration demonstrates the ability to transcend the boundaries that confine characters, it must construct the very boundaries it displays itself transcending. Rather than being a static condition, then, the evidence of an unquestioned authority, omniscience is the inscription of a series of oppositions which mark a difference between describer and objects of description: oppositions between sympathy and irony, involvement and distance, privacy and publicity, character and narrator, self and other – and, most generally, the assertion of narratorial knowledge and its absence in characters. Omniscience is an effect of narrative strategies, continually – in spite of and in distinct contrast to its invisibility – making itself felt” (p. 6). Jaffe also notices “the frequent use of disguise and deception” (p. 57) in nineteenth century literature (especially Dickens) and arrives at an interpretation of the motif of disguise as rooted in the idea of true knowledge which at least in literature surfaces always in a moment of surprise: “And knowledge serves no practical function and has no special power, unless power is defined as the creation of a perceptible gap between one

religious ‘truth’ and ‘illusion’ become distinguishable and the potential for purification is furthered. The meaning of life, or of segments thereof, is thus apprehended “by looking back over a temporal process in which every part of the process is assessed by its contribution to the total result”.<sup>93</sup> The retrospective identification of underlying principles which explain a series of apparently contingent events is a strategy of ontologization, of projecting or implanting preconceived categories into narrated ‘lived experience’ which in turn seems to confirm the validity of the categories itself and weakens the psychological resistance to acceptance.<sup>94</sup> Jain conversion stories, or *dharmakathās*, always culminate in the insight, renunciation and final salvation of the hero of the story. It may be argued that Jain texts with a greater historical content, such as the monastic chronicles, are resistant to ontological projections. However, even a cursory look at the material shows that they are similarly framed by cosmological and soteriological conceptions. The chronologies of the monastic orders, the *paṭṭāvalīs*, generally begin with the death of Mahāvīra and construct a mostly imaginative but not entirely invented link of successions up to the present, but also anticipate the end of their line in the not too distant future, as predicted by Mahāvīra in view of the unchangeable cosmological time-cycles. In the light of the Jain ‘higher critique’ it ultimately does not matter at what time one *ācārya* was preceded by another, except for often deliberately historically inaccurate sectarian historiography. The only thing that counts is the soteriological trajectory of the individual soul. Through the method of

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character’s knowledge and another’s, a gap measured, finally, by its potential to surprise” (pp. 56f.).

<sup>93</sup> Dilthey, in V. Turner, “Social Dramas and Stories about Them”, *Critical Inquiry* 7 (1980): 157. Cf. B. Kapferer, *A Celebration of Demons* (Bloomington, 1983): 189.

<sup>94</sup> In Hegel’s *Wissenschaft der Logik* II (Frankfurt/M., 1969): 24–35 the circle underlying the reflective process of ontologization is called ‘the dialectic of positing and prepositing’ (*Setzen und Voraussetzen*) and analysed without consideration of human psychology. R. Carnap, *Meaning and Necessity* (Chicago, 1950/1956): 214 argued with good reasons that the acceptance of ontological statements is always based on practical, not theoretical, reasons: “An alleged statement of the reality of the system of entities is a pseudostatement without cognitive content. To be sure, we have to face at this point an important question; but it is a practical, not a theoretical question; it is the question of whether or not to accept the new linguistic forms. The acceptance cannot be judged as being either true or false because it is not an assertion. It can only be judged as being more or less expedient, fruitful, conducive to the aim for which the language is intended. Judgments of this kind supply the motivation for the decision of accepting or rejecting the kind of entities”. See also E. Morscher, “Ontology as a Normative Science”, in: E. Morscher, J. Czermak & P. Weingartner (eds.), *Problems in Logic and Ontology* (Graz, 1977): 123.

retrospective reinterpretation the surface meaning of both purely fictitious narratives and chronologies can be ‘flouted’ through acts of “salvific exploitation”.<sup>95</sup> In this process, intentional multivocality is produced precisely by “reducing the polysemantic possibilities to a single interpretation”,<sup>96</sup> that is, to the author’s preferred version of Jain doctrine, to create effects of religious ‘insight’ and to force the ‘social implication’ of behavioural change.<sup>97</sup> This can be done in such a way that the surface plot itself is hardly touched at all:

For the moral teaching imparted by the story does not lie in the events themselves as they are related in the tale, but in the explanation which the kevalin gives at the end of this story. This kevalin shows that all the misfortunes undergone by the persons which act a part in his narrative, have been caused by bad deeds, and that all their good luck has been caused by good actions, done by them in previous existences. It is clear that this method of teaching morals is applicable to any story whatsoever ... the consequence of this fact is, that no story-telling monk is obliged to alter any story handed down to him, and that, from this reason, Jain-stories are much more reliable sources of folk-lore than the stories handed down in the books of the Bauddhas.<sup>98</sup>

From a discourse theoretical point of view, the intended effect of including the exegesis as an integral part of a story is to force a ‘social’ implication upon the audience, who should realise the principles of non-violence in their own life. Forcing a ‘social implicature’ upon an audience is achieved less through the textual rhetorics itself than through the normative impact of the setting. As W. Iser argues, the textual and social meaning of a text is created to a large extent by the “actions involved in responding to the text”,<sup>99</sup> that is, the interpretations and reactions of the listeners or readers. A literary work is not the text itself, but the end product of the interaction between text

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<sup>95</sup> Ruegg, “Purport, Implicature and Presupposition”, 317. Cf. Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 149f.

<sup>96</sup> Iser, “The Reading Process”, 290.

<sup>97</sup> From a pragmatic point of view, the ‘salvific principle’ of insight creation through acts of symbolic violence appears merely as a culturally specific norm, a systematic distortion of communication which, indeed, as Ruegg, “Purport, Implicature and Presupposition”, 318 argues, cannot be inferred from the surface meaning of a communication, only elicited via a systematic hermeneutics of the doctrinal system as a whole. See also S. C. Levinson’s, *Presumptive Meanings: The Theory of Conversational Implicature* (Cambridge/Massachusetts, 2006): 11, notion of ‘preferred meanings’.

<sup>98</sup> Hertel, *Literature*, 9.

<sup>99</sup> Iser, “The Reading Process”, 279.

and the individual reader, who finally ‘realizes’ (*konkretisiert*) its implied meaning:

The text provokes certain expectations which in turn we project on to the text in such a way that we reduce the polysemantic possibilities to a single interpretation in keeping with the expectations aroused, thus extracting an individual, configurative meaning. The polysemantic nature of the text and the illusion-making of the reader are opposed factors.<sup>100</sup>

There are two aspects to our notion of social implication. From a disinterested phenomenological point of view every sentence is a multivocal statement: “the sentence does not consist solely of a statement ... but aims at something which is beyond what it actually says”.<sup>101</sup> The unbiased individual reader reduces the range of possible intentional sentence correlatives according to his or her own individual dispositions and in this way creates textual meaning. A sermon, however, is a normatively regulated setting with pre-structured social expectations and limited freedom of unchecked individual interpretation in the face of self-referential narrative hermeneutics. Only from pragmatic and sociolinguistic, for instance Gricean perspectives, the normative presuppositions of discourse come into view. Here, not only the intentional sentence correlatives created by isolated readers constitute the crucial ‘unsaid’ dimension of a text, but the doctrine-based social intention of the speaker expressed in a normatively regulated speech situation which might be ‘realised’ or not by individual listeners.<sup>102</sup>

### 1.5 Self-Exegesis

What the narrative cliché of a text-immanent Jain exegesis added at the end of a Jain narrative text does, I would argue, is to further reduce the range of possible interpretations for the audience by introducing a sense of normative intentionality into imported fictional or historical tales (if one wishes to use such a distinction), and to suggest both a ontologically ‘true’ and a pragmatic interpretation, which retrospectively – through contrast – reveals the ‘illusory’ character of the audiences prior responses to the early sections of the story and supplants it with its own, supposedly ‘higher’ or ‘deeper’, form of

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<sup>100</sup> *Ib.*, p. 290.

<sup>101</sup> *Ib.*, p. 282.

<sup>102</sup> Habermas, *Theorie des kommunikativen Handelns*, vol. 1, argues for a primacy of the norms over speaker intention. The implications for the theoretically informed study of Jain discourse are discussed in Flügel, “Power and Insight”, pp. 87ff.

interpretation. The superiority of the doctrinally informed ascetic interpretation over interpretation of other narrative characters is partly a consequence of its retrospective mode of presentation, which allows for detached, transcendent systematicity, whereas prior responses are, as Iser shows in his work, time-related and built on constantly changing perspectives. The effect of the self-referential exegesis within the text is the creation of systematic ambiguity of the elements of the story which, through the additional interpretation from the teleological, ‘ultimate point of view’, gain a ‘symbolic’, multivocal character<sup>103</sup> for an audience whose ‘natural response’ to the narrated events is to be shaken in order to prepare the ground for potential effects of religious insight.<sup>104</sup> In proposing a more powerful causal explanation of the narrated events on the basis of their *karman* theory, ascetic characters demonstrate the ‘illusory’ character of prior interpretations and thus confronts the members of the audience, who were initially enticed to identify with the main heroes of the story, with a contrast between the univocal ‘truth’ of Jainism and their own deficient, obviously highly ambiguous interpretations.<sup>105</sup> Frustration on the part of the listener is, however, prevented through the pragmatic, teleological scheme of interpretation which suggests practical ways of how to avoid further ‘self-deception’ through a real change of life.<sup>106</sup> In this way, by using ‘salvific violence’ and indirectly attacking personal responses, and by implanting a ‘pragmatic’ interpretation into a ‘fictional’ text, the worldly desires of the audience may be momentarily reoriented toward implementing Jain ideals of non-violence. This strategy of ‘destroying’ the profane universe of conventional meanings thus operates similar to the tantric use of intentional language, *saṃdhyā bhāṣā*, which, as Eliade<sup>107</sup> and Bharati<sup>108</sup> have shown, uses the methods of ‘flouting’ common sense meanings in order to create a ‘paradoxical situation’ which elicits experiences of insight and behavioural pressures.

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<sup>103</sup> ‘Multivocal’ from the perspective of presupposed conversational norms, but ‘univocal’ from a phenomenological perspective, that is, reduced to a single dogmatic interpretation.

<sup>104</sup> Cf. Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, xviii f. Hariṣeṇa’s Story of King Yaśodhara, in F. Hardy, “The Story of King Yaśodhara”. *The Clever Adulteress and Other Stories*. Ed. P. Granoff. Oakville: Mosaic Press, 1990: 118–139, here 129.

<sup>105</sup> Cf. J. C. Jain, “Vasudevahiṇḍī”, 114.

<sup>106</sup> Cf. Mone 1987: 325.

<sup>107</sup> M. Eliade, *Yoga: Unsterblichkeit und Freiheit* (Frankfurt/M., 1959/1985): 259.

<sup>108</sup> A. Bharati, *The Tantric Tradition* (London, 1975): 180.

The authors of (medieval) Jain stories have succeeded in transforming popular tales, biographies and histories into conversion stories with a hidden didactic and hence social intention in mind, that is, to evoke similar experiences as narrated in the story in their audience to effect progressive acts of renunciation. This is achieved particularly through the violation of the expectations of the audience, and the inclusion of the character of the interpreting ascetic into the story. Here, the narrated transcendent perspective of *pāramārthikanaya* and the long-term dogmatic intention, *abhiprāya*, of the narrator seem to merge in such a way that real life and the events of the story become temporarily indistinguishable.

## 2 Two Stories

We have seen so far that conversion is presented in medieval Jain stories as a general narrative motif employed by Jain ascetics to influence their audience and to stimulate real conversion experiences. In order to demonstrate the applicability of our theory, I now turn to the analysis of two cases of biographical narratives whose plots focus on the interaction between kings and merchants and result in conversion experiences: (1) The *Śālibhadracarita* (SC<sub>1-2</sub>) of Dharmakumāra (1277 C.E.), and (2) the *Ardhakathānaka* (AK<sub>1-3</sub>) of Banārasīdās (1586–1644 C.E.). These two stories have been selected because they illustrate how medieval and early modern Jain authors applied the general principle of ‘renunciation as the ideal form of conflict-resolution’ to interpret the near-real-life case of structural conflicts between all-powerful kings and subordinate merchants also in religious terms as a relationship between Śaivism and Jainism. This section also plays a mediating role for the following discussion of the real process of conversion towards Jainism and its benefits for merchants *vis à vis* kings and ties in with the above argument on the rhetorical function of royal pomp.<sup>109</sup>

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<sup>109</sup> There are numerous other examples of Jain *kathās* (written in different Indic languages), which give prominence to merchants as heroes, and which focus particularly on relationships to the kings and Jain ascetics (see bibliography). It is typical for Jain stories that kings and merchants are the principal heroes. This is exceptional, not only compared with classical brāhmaṇical literature, which does not represent general social interests of merchants at all, but also compared with the later *bhakti*-literature à la Kabīr (1440–1518) or Tulsīdās (1532–1623), which does not give prominence to socially mobile elites like kings or merchants who are shown to improve their purity as is generally the case in the Jain-stories, but which instead typi-



## 2.1 The Conversion of the Virtuous Merchant Śālibhadra

The *Śālibhadracarita* is still “one of the best known Jain didactic religious stories”<sup>110</sup> and still one of the most popular Jain legends, which also became the subject of many poems.<sup>111</sup> For Jains, who are mostly traders, Bloomfield<sup>112</sup> explains, the legendary character of the merchant Sāli (Śāli) (lit. rice)<sup>113</sup> is seen as the paragon of luck and wealth.<sup>114</sup> Traditionally, the story has its place in the Prakrit and Sanskrit *Āvaśyaka* and *Bṛhatkalpabhāṣya* literature,<sup>115</sup> which illustrates the benefits for the Jain mendicant or layperson of following the Jain moral rules, *vratas*, in the context of the rules of proper conduct and the rites of repentance, *pratikramaṇa*.<sup>116</sup> The following paraphrase of the relevant content of the SC is taken from Bloomfield’s<sup>117</sup> account of the Sanskrit version of the SC, which was composed by Muni Dharmakumāra, and, because it appeared not

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cally tell a story of a ‘man’ who has a vision, but whose social position does not improve subsequently but is merely confirmed (Peter Friedlander has pointed me to the different approach of Hindu *bhakti* literature).

<sup>110</sup> J. E. Laidlaw, *Riches and Renunciation: Religion, Economy, and Society among the Jains* (Oxford: Clarendon, 1995): 380–82; 381, n. 21: Śālibhadra = no. 4 of a 6-part list of designations for auspiciousness and increase (*śubha* and *lābha*) on Jain account books: “The *riddhi* (prosperity) of Dhanna and Śālibhadra” teaches, according to Laidlaw, that “luxury does not preclude eventual spiritual progress”.

<sup>111</sup> G. Baumann, *Drei Jaina-Gedichte in Alt Gujarātī* (Wiesbaden, 1975): 102ff.

<sup>112</sup> Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 261, 276.

<sup>113</sup> See the chapter “Sāli” in *Viy.* 6.7.

<sup>114</sup> Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 265f. The virtue of gift-giving is also exemplified by Śreyāms’ gift to Pārśva and Mūladeva. See M. Bloomfield, “The Character and Adventures of Mūladeva”, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* 52, 212 (1913): 616ff.

<sup>115</sup> On the *Āvaśyaka*-literature, see E. Leumann, *Die Āvaśyaka-Erzählungen. Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes herausgegeben von der Deutschen Morgenländischen Gesellschaft. X. Band, No. 2* (Leipzig, 1897); E. Leumann, *Übersicht über die Āvaśyaka Literatur* (Hamburg, 1934); K. Bruhn, “*Āvaśyaka-Studies I*”, in: K. Bruhn & A. Wezler (eds.), *Studien zum Jainismus und Buddhismus* (Wiesbaden, 1981): 11–49; K. Bruhn, “Bibliography of Studies Connected with the *Āvaśyaka*-Commentaries”, in: B. Plut (comp.), *Catalogue of the Papers of Ernst Leumann in the Institute for the Culture and History of India and Tibet, University of Hamburg* (Stuttgart, 1998): 119–36; N. Balbir, *Āvaśyaka-Studien* (Stuttgart, 1993); A. Mette, “The Tales Belonging to the *Namaskāra-Vyākhyā* of the *Āvaśyaka-Cūrṇi*: A Survey”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 11 (1983): 129–44.

<sup>116</sup> Cf. Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 261. For text references on “Śālibhadra”, the first of which appear in the *Āvaśyaka* literature, see M. L. Mehta & K. R. Chandra, *Prakrit Proper Names*, vol. 2 (Ahmedabad, 1972): 779.

<sup>117</sup> Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 273–80.

polished enough, later poetically reworked by Pradyumnasūri.<sup>118</sup>

The text, in its final form, is written in the highest style of mahākāvya, governed by the extremest habits of Hindu rhetoric (alaṃkāra). ... There is scarcely a stanza in the entire poem free from such rhetorical devices, some of which are pretty certain to occur in other texts of this class.<sup>119</sup>

I will paraphrase now Bloomfield's digest of the narration of the conversion of Śāli at length in order to give a flavour of the rhetorical style of the text as well. The *Śālibhadracarita* in general belongs to the genre of the *dānadharmakathās* or *dānāvadānas*, that is "stories in which the karma accumulated in certain existences bears fruit, good or evil, in a subsequent life".<sup>120</sup> The overall plot shows that because Śāli gave alms to a *yati* in his former life, he will be liberated at the end of this life. The story of the actual conversion, a variant of *pratyekabuddha* narratives, goes as follows:<sup>121</sup>

In his previous life Śāli was the shepherd boy Saṃgama, son of the virtuous widow Dhanyā (wealth), which was so poor, that she did not even had the means to cook him a rice-pudding at the occasion of a religious feast. Dhanyā was very upset about this and, in her desperation, accepted the offer of her neighbours to provide her with the necessary ingredients. But when Saṃgama received the delicious dish, and was about to eat it, a Jain ascetic, who had fasted for an entire month, suddenly passed by, looking for alms to break his fast, *pāraṇa*. Immediately realizing this unique opportunity for furthering his spiritual advantage, Saṃgama picked up the pudding and gave it to the ascetic, who accepted and left to his abode. His mother, returning from the kitchen, did not realize that an ascetic had visited her house, and thought her son ate everything himself. She therefore gave him more pudding, and Saṃgama ate so much, that he died from

<sup>118</sup> Bloomfield's digest of this version is interesting in itself, because he, like Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, xvii–xix, stresses the pivotal role of intentional multivocality in this text. It is based on SC<sub>1</sub>. See also SC<sub>2</sub> edited and translated by E. Bender, *Śālibhadra-Dhanna-Carita* (The Tale of the Quest for Ultimate Release by Śālibhadra and Dhanna). A Work in Old Gujarātī Critically Edited and Translated with a Grammatical Analysis and Glossary (New Haven, 1992). Other well know versions of the SC can be found in chapter 10.57–181 of the *Triṣaṣṭīśalākāpuruṣacaritra* of Hemacandra (TŚPC<sub>1</sub>), translated by H. M. Johnson, *The Lives of Sixty-three Illustrious Persons*, vol. 6 (Baroda, 1962): 254–59 (TŚPC<sub>2</sub>); and Rājaśekhara's *Kathākośa* (KK), translated by C. H. Tawney, *The Kathākośa or Treasury of Stories*, by Rājaśekhara (London, 1895): 78ff.

<sup>119</sup> Bloomfield, "Śālibhadra Carita", 262f.

<sup>120</sup> *Ib.*, p. 260, n. 3.

<sup>121</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 273–87.

indigestion on the same day.<sup>122</sup> The great merit of his gift, however, secured him a favourable rebirth in the town of Rājagṛha, as Śāli (rice), the son of the rich merchant Gobhandra and his wife Bhadrā, who assured that he was blessed with every worldly fortune, living in a palace with thirty-two wives.

One day the ruler of Rājagṛha, King Śreṇika (Bimbisāra), was offered magic shawls by certain merchants from Nepal for so high a price that he refuses to buy them. ‘With such a sum’, Śreṇika retorted, ‘one may collect elephants, horses, and men, that will ensure victory in battle; but what power has a mere garment.’ The Queen (Cellaṇā), who joined the king unexpectedly, crushed the merchants’ hope of doing business by spurring these ‘jewels of garments’ as being of no more use than ‘a bull’s dew-lap’. The merchants then waited upon Bhadrā, the rich merchant Śāli’s mother, who finally bought the shawls at their full price, cuts them up, and presents them to her thirty-two daughters-in-law, who, in turn, placed them under Śāli’s feet.

Queen Cellaṇā heard of this, chided the king, and bade him to get the shawls by fair means or foul. The king sent his doorkeeper to get the shawls from Bhadrā, but she was unable to deliver the goods which she no longer owned. The doorkeeper reported this and also that Śāli was living in more than royal pomp. The queen’s ironic importunities had the effect of ‘weaving Śāli’s image into the king’s soul’. Hence, he sent the doorkeeper for a second time to Śāli’s palace with an invitation to wait upon the king. Bhadrā, Śāli’s mother, went instead, and told the king that her son does not even leave the pinnacle of his palace to visit his pleasure grove any more than religion, *dharma*, leaves *Āryadeśa* (orthodox India). She, in turn, invited the king to grace her house with his presence; and he accepted the invitation. She then arranged her palace for lavish hospitality. The king arrived, was received in state, and seated upon a jewelled throne. Now Bhadrā told her son that Śreṇika, the king had come. Yet, instead of ‘Śreṇika’, Śāli understood ‘*krayāṇaka*’ (any purchasable object),<sup>123</sup> and said absent-mindedly: ‘Look over the ware, weigh it, pay for it, and take it.’ Bhadrā, delighted, exclaimed that she is the most fortunate of women, because her son is so deeply immersed in pleasure as to misunderstand a plain statement. She replied that the

<sup>122</sup> *Ib.*, p. 265 is ambiguous on this point (“enters into a state of bliss”) (SC I.116), which is clearly expressed in Johnson’s translation of the story of Śālibhadra in Hemacandra’s *Triṣaṣṭiśalākāpuruṣacaritra*, ch. 10 (TSPC<sub>2</sub>, p. 255).

<sup>123</sup> This is Bloomfield’s, *ib.*, p. 274, n. 49 interpretation.

king is present in all his majesty. Her exclamation, ‘It is the king!’<sup>124</sup> brought Śāli repentance, and he realised that even the strong and powerful are of no account: that existence itself is impermanence, where the highest ruler is a mere living creature with feet and hands like him self: ‘Of him that wears the shape of a mere bubble in the ocean of saṃsāra, how much is his princehood valued by the wise? Out upon his non-existing glory which has no more permanent habitat than a wandering harlot’. ‘I know that the Lord of the three worlds, holy Vīra, is my refuge; what use have I then for this eunuch king of a chess-board?’ If one is a real king only through great virtue; what other king can then prevail against him?

Though Śāli, like any one of true faith, looked upon Śreṇika now as the unwelcome sigh of error, he respected his mother’s wish, and descended with his wives from the seventh floor of his palace to pay his respects. The king was delighted, embraced him, and, amorously, set him upon his lap. While the king enjoyed the highest bliss from this contact, Śāli broke into tears. Bhadrā told the king that Śāli, accustomed to heavenly wreaths, clothes, food, and unguents, furnished to him by his father, who was a god in heaven, abhors exceedingly men’s breath. She begged him to let Śāli go, the pet of fortune, tender as a lotus. The King releases Śāli who again retired with his wives to the upper terrace of his palace.

Then, Bhadrā ordered a grand shampoo for the king. When the king was finally being rinsed, his signet ring falls into the water, ‘like a beloved mistress in her tantrums, when she has become subject to anger and pride.’ The king was annoyed by the loss, but when, at Bhadrā’s order, the water was drawn off by a maid, he easily saw the ring in the bath. ‘Like a villager in the midst of city-folk, like a coward in the midst of heroes, like a pauper in the midst of the rich, like a fool in the midst of the wise, it seems now a lustreless thing among jewels.’ This chilled his love for Śāli, though, at the same time he recognized his superior character. With play upon Śāli’s name (rice), he exclaims: ‘While we, “Barley”, have fallen from our place, must endure splitting and other treatment of grain, “Rice” (Śāli) alone of all grains is not crushed’ ‘No lie it is, he is surely “Rice” (Śāli), crest-jewel of noble grains, for whose grains of virtue the king-parrots yearn forsooth.’ The king, in this way, realized that Śāli, as the impersonation of the

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<sup>124</sup> In Johnson’s translation of TSPC2, p. 257, the dialogue which triggered the experience of insight is given as follows: “Mother, attend to the business which you know yourself. What have I to do with that?” The Bhadrā sai, “This is not goods to be bought; but he is lord of all people and of you also’.”

Jina, unexpectedly served him, too, for a noble purpose. Bhadrā then entertained the king sumptuously, showered gifts upon him, and the king returned to his palace.

After the experience of *vairāgya* (loss of taste for the world) ‘produced by mere sight of the king’, Śāli realized the dangers of identifying himself with the king, who, as he now understood, plays a dangerously ambiguous role for him: ‘The existence of kings has brought him bliss (through *pratyakabodhi*); his spiritual eye is clear as a star.’ Nevertheless (remembering how he attracted the king) he railed at the ‘royal serpent’, who constantly seeks to devour the unwary serpentfolk, and decided to resort to the mantra and the divinity to prevent the destruction of bliss by the ‘kings-disease’ (*rājamandya*).<sup>125</sup> Returning to his bad experience with the king’s breath, he bitterly exclaimed: ‘That influence which is spat out (left behind) by licentious king-demons must be avoided like eating in the night.’ And he contrasted the call of the Lord Vīra to a holy life, ‘which sits like a diadem upon the head’, with the king’s command which had suddenly fallen upon Śāli to his injury and sorrow: ‘The crow, “possession by the king”, making noise on high, surely bodes misfortune as it touches my head.’ Thus, Śāli regarded the king’s favours as degradation, whereas others would delight in being his slaves. His soul and body are afflicted alike by him: ‘the king (*rājan*) has turned out to be the kings-disease (*rājamandya*), and his mother Bhadrā has performed a grievous *ajākrpaṇīya* act<sup>126</sup> in introducing to him her son who is now afflicted by the king’s breath’.

In this frame of mind, Śāli resorted to the *gaṇa*-leader (*sūri*) Dharmaghoṣa, instructor in the war against the ‘serpent existence’, who taught him in a largish sermon how to cast off the fetters that bind to the world by abandoning the triad of sins, and adopting the three restraints (*gupti*). Lauded by the three potencies, *bhūsa*, *bhūvasa*, and *svara*, he will then become ‘Lord of the World’. Śāli, in ecstasy, cried out: ‘I will abandon existence, and, through your teaching, apply my mind to Salvation’.

### 2.1.1 Structural Conflicts between Kings and Merchants

This story is still popular amongst Jain *baniyās*, I believe, because it successfully alludes to characteristic patterns of friction/conflict

<sup>125</sup> “Rājamandya: double entente, ‘king as the cause of disease’ and = kṣayaroga or rājayakṣma, ‘consumption’” (ib., pp. 278f., n. 66).

<sup>126</sup> “Unexpected untoward happening” (ib., pp. 280, App. iv: 307).

between officially a-political middle class traders and superior holders of political power which can still be experienced in real life today. In medieval and early modern India, the structure of the elitist *rājā-baniyā*-alliance was characterised by a relationship of solidarity *vis à vis* the lower classes, *varṇas*, on the one hand and by a latent conflict concerning control over material resources on the other hand. The relationship between merchants and kings was structurally ambiguous and perceived by merchants in terms of the dual appearance of the king as the source of both ‘fears and favours’.<sup>127</sup> This relationship, where *rājputs* and *baniyās* appear as opposites on one level and joined together on another level<sup>128</sup> can be understood in terms of Dumont’s model of ‘hierarchical complementarity’, not unlike the relationship between *brāhmaṇs* and *kṣatriyas*.<sup>129</sup> In paraphrase of Dumont, thus, the king appears superior from the dominant, political-religious point of view but dependent from an economic or material point of view. The merchant, on the other hand, though politically subordinate, is economically the master, because the king can not get involved in business himself, if he wants to maintain his status. However, in order to finance his public display of splendour and pomp he ‘must give a place to economics without saying so, and is obliged to publicly close his eyes to this point on pain of destroying himself’.<sup>130</sup> The reproduction of the structural relationship between the king’s public generosity and its hidden pragmatic conditions presupposed an oblique system of delegation of the fulfilment of the indirect pragmatic intentions of the king to subordinate elite groups, particularly the military aristocracy and traders who mutually controlled each other and served the king by looking after his unspoken material needs by offering gifts and tributes. Complementary to the king’s outgoing appearance, social structural constraints required traders to maintain a frugal public image within the hierarchical system of statuses. Public generosity was celebrated and performed merely as a secondary virtue.

Brāhmaṇical literature does not grant economics recognition as a separate domain but presents it as ‘undifferentiated within politics’ as Dumont has shown. Relatively autonomous and cohesive networks of economic actors could and occasionally were, however, established

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<sup>127</sup> E.g. AK. Compare also S. Freud’s analysis of the structural ambiguity of father-son relationships, for instance in *Totem und Tabu* (Leipzig, 1913).

<sup>128</sup> Babb, “Monks and Miracles”, 7f.

<sup>129</sup> L. Dumont, *Homo Hierarchicus* (Chicago, 1980): 290.

<sup>130</sup> *Ib.*, p. 77.

under the umbrella of certain sectarian movements such as Jainism.<sup>131</sup> This ideal is evident in Jain literature like the *Śālibhadra-carita*, which explicitly depicts merchants as an autonomous group.<sup>132</sup> The ‘hierarchical’ relationship between merchants and kings, I would argue, is implicit in the chiasmic structural relationship of Śāli and Bhadrā, on the one hand, and Śreṇika and Cellaṇā, on the other hand, where the male characters represent the dominant orientation (i.e. economics and politics) and the women the reversed orientation on secondary levels. The king thus appears as pompous and not interested in economics (‘what power has a mere garment’), only in military battle, while his wife is presented as greedy, jealous and keen on material objects. Śāli, the merchant, on the other hand, is depicted as modest and indifferent towards both politics and material objects, and as fully concentrated on business and religion. His mother is presented as the political negotiator of the family and the person who displays public generosity.

### 2.1.2 Reversal of Role-Attributes and Interactive Self-Elevation

Starting with this structural pattern, the story unfolds mainly through the rhetorical reversal of the role-attributes of the leading characters – Śāli and Śreṇika – which are both presented as deficient, in one way or another, compared to their respective class-specific role-ideals.<sup>133</sup> Śāli is presented as a person with a truly generous royal character, transcending worldly temptations and orientating himself towards the social whole disregarding material wealth, just like a great merchant, *sāhū*,<sup>134</sup> whereas Śreṇika, is depicted as covetous, violent, jealous, intrusive, corrupt and generally orientated merely towards his personal advantage, as his visit of the merchant’s household shows. Śreṇika thus appears as a manifestation or rather as a caricature of the covetous merchant (ib.). The crucial rhetorical opening move is here that the king is not granted any special positional

<sup>131</sup> Ib., p. 165f.; C. A. Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars: North Indian Society in the Age of British Expansion, 1770–1870* (Cambridge, 1983): 183.

<sup>132</sup> There is a rich literature on this phenomenon. See for instance V. Mudholkar, “The Guilds of Artisans and Merchants in the Jain Kathā Literature”, *Journal of the Ganganatha Jha Kendriya Sanskrita Vidhya-peetha* 93, 1–4 (1987) 169ff.

<sup>133</sup> Compare the first chapter in S. Freud, *Der Mann Moses und die monotheistische Religion* (Amsterdam, 1939).

<sup>134</sup> Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, 383, argues that the ideal pre-modern (Jain) merchant is the one who finds a balance between the roles of the miser and of the great *sāhū*.

‘sacredness’ beyond the manifest attributes of his personal character. This is in accordance with Jain principles. Arai has shown that Jaina *nītisāstras* do not accept a nominal concept of kingship but stresses instead the identity of Jaina kingship and perfect manhood: “the Jaina king must be a perfect person ... he must strive for perfection just like an ascetic, and only in this way, can he be seen as superior as well as equal to his subjects”.<sup>135</sup> The implication of the story, therefore, seems to be that Śāli, the man with the superior personal character, should really be the king and not Śreṇika, who by means of his defective character has no legitimacy from the point of view of Jainism. The person of the king is, in other words, presented as exchangeable, not as a sacred being per se.

Śāli’s character is depicted as deficient as well. Initially, he does not recognize the pre-eminence of asceticism but apparently desires the attributes of worldly kingship for himself (living on the seventh floor of a palace with his thirty-two wives, never leaving his palace, etc.). This narrative reversal of attributes can be interpreted as a form of symbolic violence by means of ‘flouting’ expectations. The emotional energy generated with the help of these rhetorical devices is, however, contained within an overarching teleological structure. At the end of each narrative stage structural tensions produced by role reversals are channelled into dialectical tales of mutual self-elevation.<sup>136</sup> The *Śālibhadracarita* shows how mutual causation of experiences of destruction and loss generate an interactive dynamic resulting in acts of voluntary asceticism which benefits both Śāli and Śreṇika. Crucially, it is the experience of destruction and loss of a desired object or value which is interpreted as a vehicle of spiritual gain and depicted as the main impetus for the conversion experiences of Śāli and Śreṇika. Thus, ironically, through the king’s uninvited intrusion into his house, Śāli is ‘liberated’ from his deluded identification with the king, and Śreṇika is ‘liberated’ from his desire for material values through the loss of his royal ring in the course of the ritual bath.<sup>137</sup>

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<sup>135</sup> T. Arai, “The Structure of Jaina Kingship. As Reviewed by Prabandhacintāmaṇi”, in: J. F. Richards (ed.), *Kingship and Authority in South India* (Madison, 1978): 101.

<sup>136</sup> *Ib.*, p. 102.

<sup>137</sup> On the motif of the lost ring, see J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 108–11.



### 2.1.3 Images of Destruction, Conversion and Reconstitution

What, precisely, happened to Śāli during his conversion experience? Jain doctrine distinguishes between two forms of conversion:

(a) ‘indirect’ conversion through the positive ‘influence’ of others (i.e., the sermon of a Tīrthaṅkara or Jain ascetics),<sup>138</sup> and

(b) ‘direct’ conversion through the miraculous and solitary spontaneous experience of the transitory nature of all worldly objects (*pratyekabodhi*).

Only the second mode offers the possibility of enlightenment for laypeople, independently from the ascetics. Because the *Śālibhadra-carita* relates such events it is regarded as a *pratyekabuddha* story.<sup>139</sup> Conversion experiences are hierarchically classified: direct, personal insight is regarded as a higher form of conversion than a conversion through argumentation,<sup>140</sup> i.e. by means of the sermon of an ascetic or of narrative literature; and the higher the conventional value of the object which triggers a feeling of disgust of the world, *vairāgya*, the higher the status of the person having this insight. Such *vairāgya*-stories are a widespread motif in Jaina universal histories, Bruhn noted:<sup>141</sup>

The hero of these stories (and of the drama which has of course a different beginning) always gains after much suffering and exertion some valuable object (generally a woman) which he loses later on through adverse circumstances. These circumstances are obviously later additions

<sup>138</sup> E.g. ĀS<sub>2</sub> 1.7.3.1. According to Utt<sub>2</sub> 28.16–27, faith (*samyaktva*) is produced by: 1. (spontaneously) nature (*nisarga*), 2. instruction (*upadeśa*), 3. command (*ājñā*), 4. study of the scriptures (*sūtra*), 5. suggestion (*bija*), 6. comprehension of the meaning of the sacred lore (*abhigama*), 7. complete course of study (*vistāra*), 8. religious exercise (*kriyā*), 9. brief exposition (*saṃkṣepa*), 10. the law (*dharma*). “Right belief depends on the acquaintance with truth, on the devotion to those who know the truth, and on the avoiding of schismatic and heretical tendencies. There is no (right) conduct without right belief ...” (Utt<sub>2</sub> 28.28–29). “By religious discourses [*dharmakathā*] he obtains destruction of the Karman ... which secures, for the future, permanent bliss” (Utt<sub>2</sub> 29.23). But “Clever talking [not acting; Utt<sub>2</sub> 6.9] will not work salvation; how should philosophical instruction do it?” (Utt<sub>2</sub> 6.10).

<sup>139</sup> Cf. Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 259, 275, n. 51. On *pratyekhabuddhabodhita*, see TS 10.7; for the four principal Jain *pratyekabuddha* narratives, see Jacobi, *Ausgewählte Erzählungen*, 33ff.; Charpentier *Paccekabuddhageschichten*.

<sup>140</sup> Leumann, “Beziehungen”, 532 indicated that the conversion dialogue between Keśi and Paesi in the *Rājaprasāniya Upāṅga* (pp. 490–527) is a rare instance of a conversion dialogue in the Jain canonical literature itself, in contrast to the Buddhist scriptures. Cf. Rāy<sub>1-2</sub>.

<sup>141</sup> See Bruhn, “Introduction”, 26f. for a bibliographical survey.

to the original motif.<sup>142</sup>

A similar phenomenon, the rare shock or wonder experienced at the emotionally involving sight of either natural objects or events such as filth, sickness or death<sup>143</sup> or in connection with evocative works of art referred to by the Pāli concept *saṃvega* (aesthetic shock) has been described by Coomaraswamy in the following words:

It is a state of feeling, but always more than a physical reaction. The ‘shock’ is essentially one of the realization of the implications of what are strictly speaking only the aesthetic surfaces of phenomena that may be liked or disliked as such. The complete experience transcends this condition of ‘irritability’.<sup>144</sup>

Coomaraswamy analytically distinguishes between two phases of the shock which are felt as parts of an instant experience of a ‘disinterested aesthetic contemplation’ – the physical sensation on the one hand and the realization of its meaning on the other:

In either phase, the external signs of the experience may be emotional, but while the signs may be alike, the conditions they express are unlike. In the first phase, there is really a disturbance, in the second there is the experience of peace that cannot be described as an emotion in the sense that fear and love or hate are emotions. It is for this reason that that Indian rhetoricians have always hesitated to reckon ‘Peace’ (*śānti*) as a ‘flavour’ (*rasa*) in one category with the other flavours.<sup>145</sup>

It is interesting to see how Jain stories characterise the attributes of external objects which might serve as external activating conditions or vehicles for spiritual awakening (*saṃvega*) or religious insight (*samyag-darśana*).<sup>146</sup> The Jain scriptures describe these miraculous events usually in terms of a sudden weakening of karmic bondage,

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<sup>142</sup> Bruhn, “Introduction”, 23. See Bruhn, “Repetition”, 32 on the motif of the *vairāgya*-shock (aversion leading to renunciation) in Jaina literature.

<sup>143</sup> See the stories explaining incidents of conversion based on deductive knowledge, *pāriṇāmikī buddhi*, listed in NS<sub>1-2</sub> v. 54.

<sup>144</sup> A. K. Coomaraswamy, “*Saṃvega*: Aesthetic Shock”, *Harvard Journal of Asiatic Studies* 7 (1943): 183.

<sup>145</sup> *Ib.*, p. 184. Compare the psychological aesthetic theories of D. Freedberg, *The Power of Images: Studies in the History and Theory of Response* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1989): 439: “effectiveness of function proceeds directly from effectiveness of form”, and A. Glucklich, “Self and Sacrifice: A Phenomenological Psychology of Sacred Pain”, *The Harvard Theological Review* 92, 4 (1999): 502: “The sacrifice of a lesser-system goal reinforces the goal of a higher system”, which cannot be discussed here.

<sup>146</sup> Cf. Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 141.

which leads for instance to the remembrance of a former birth.<sup>147</sup> Bloomfield<sup>148</sup> mentions the cases of the four legendary royal *pratyekabuddhas* (*svayaṃsambuddha*):<sup>149</sup> The *pratyekabuddha* king Karakaṇḍu of Kalinga is said to have been converted through the experience of a weak bull, king Nami of Videha through the sight of a bracelet, king Naggati of Gāndhāra through a fallen mango-fruit,<sup>150</sup> and king Durmukha of Pañcāla through a fallen flag. Obviously, all these objects are deficient, incomplete or in the process of decay. It would seem that it is precisely their contamination with death, the defective and transitory nature of these objects, which permits the observer temporarily to gain ‘discriminating insight’ into the difference of ‘essence and appearance’, of ‘life and death’. The visible loss of physical attributes reveals as it were the eternal conceptual paradigm of the type: even a ‘weak bull’ still is a ‘bull’ – a symbol of strength. Even as the bull’s body decays, the image of ‘bullness’ remains (and the difference between thing and concept might come to mind). Seen as a rhetorical device, the term and image of a ‘weak bull’ is a paradoxical, multivocal object which – like a bracelet evoking the image of freedom from bondage – may elicit non-commonsensical insights into the nature of things. The preferred use of similes in conversion stories invites comparisons with the personal experience of the listener.<sup>151</sup> W. Iser,<sup>152</sup> I. Strecker, and others have also directed our attention to the role of such defective representations as rhetorical devices (FTA’s) which are used to force implicatures:

Constructing ... ‘defective conceptual representations’ deliberately in such a way that they force an implicature (in the Gricean sense) S leads H to ask himself what is ‘meant’ and not what is ‘said’ and thus embarks on the

<sup>147</sup> Cf. Utt<sub>2</sub> 9.1–2; J. C. Jain, *Prakrit Narrative Literature*, 55.

<sup>148</sup> Bloomfield, “Śālibhadra Carita”, 275.

<sup>149</sup> Cf. Utt<sub>2</sub> 18.45.

<sup>150</sup> A variation of this motif can be found in the Tamil story of the conversion of prince Cīvakan in the *Cīvakacintāmaṇi* by Tiruttakateśvar (900 C.E.) son of a king killed, later taking on the kingdom again: “In the midst of his blissful existence, he happens to see a monkey suddenly deprived of the fruit he is enjoying, and he begins to think about the impermanence of bliss. In this state of mind he comes to the temple and meets two *cāraṇas*, or Jaina ascetics, and receives lengthy instruction from them. He renounces kingship, leaves the world, and disappears, having reached the supreme goal” (Filliozat, “Jaina Narrative Literature in South India”, 98f.).

<sup>151</sup> On the important role of similes, a doctrinally recognised means of truthful expression, in Jain narratives, see for instance P. Granoff, “Authority and Innovation: A Study of the Use of Similes in the Biography of Hiravijaya to Provide Sanction for the Monk at Court”, *Jinmañjari* 1, 1 (1990): 48–60; and Balbir “Formes”, 242 ff.

<sup>152</sup> Iser, “The Reading Process”.

exploration of the implied, and possibly multiple, hidden meanings within the statement.<sup>153</sup>

In the given case, the general implication is well known to every Jain, whatever the specific secondary meanings of a story might be – it concerns the difference of *jīva* and *ajīva*.

Most Jain conversion stories operate in similar ways.<sup>154</sup> They ‘violate conversational maxims’ and construct polyvalent, evocative objects, which force a practical or social implicature upon the audience. A measured injection of conflict is inevitable for achieving any effect or social influence with a narrative. Jain conversion stories, however, seem to use references toward experiences of violence and destruction of desirable objects in a systematic way in order to elicit its opposite.

The narrative of king Vikramayaśa’s conversation in the *Sanatkumāracaritam* (SKC),<sup>155</sup> for instance, describes in painful detail how the king experiences *vairāgya* facing the decaying corpse of his mistress ‘full of worms ...’<sup>156</sup> In his next life he is reborn as the merchant Jinadharmā and renounces again, because his rival through many lives – reborn as the Brāhmaṇ Agniśarman – persuades king Naravāhana to subject him to a painful torture. It is ‘the experience of pain’ which motivates him to renounce.<sup>157</sup> The list of examples is endless.<sup>158</sup>

References to conflict and pain, I argue,<sup>159</sup> are deliberately employed by Jains as rhetorical devices in order to evoke feelings of non-identification with precisely those cherished characters and objects which are regularly presented in the opening moves of a Jain story. This inward distancing from experiences of violence and the establishing of a perspective of a disinterested onlooker presupposes a

<sup>153</sup> Strecker, *Social Practice of Symbolization*, 115.

<sup>154</sup> Cf. Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”, 349, 368.

<sup>155</sup> See H. Jacobi (ed.), *Sanatkumāracaritam, ein Abschnitt aus Haribhadras Nemināthacaritam: Eine Jaina-Legende in Apabhraṃśa* (München, 1921), and Ghatage, “Narrative Literature, 40f. on the first version of the SKC by Śrīcandra 1157 C.E. His disciple Haribhadra composed the Nemināthacaritam C.E. 1159, the year of Kumārapāla’s ‘conversion’.

<sup>156</sup> SKC 679.

<sup>157</sup> SKC 697.

<sup>158</sup> See the stories of the four *pratyekabuddhas* in Jacobi, *Ausgewählte Erzählungen*, 33ff., translated by J. J. Meyer, *Hindu Tales* (London, 1909). See also Monius, “Love, Violence”, who argues that “depictions of sexual lust and battle ... seek to evoke revulsion or disgust in their reader through sheer excess”, 140.

<sup>159</sup> Contrary to Balbir, “Normalizing Trends, 37.

splitting of the personality in an interested and in a disinterested observer<sup>160</sup> and has, in fact, the opposite effect to the identification with sacrificial violence – it becomes a form of self-renunciation. Acts of non-identification and conversion/renunciation are, thus, intrinsically related. They are the intended outcome of the ascetics' rhetorical strategy of defamiliarization, and the basis of their potential social influence. Experience of violence which does not lead to renunciation seems meaningless and destructive for the mind of the respective individual. The *Sanatkumāracaritam*, for instance, contrasts the experience of Nāgadatta, the husband of king Vikramayaśa's mistress, with the renouncing king's attitude towards the loss of the beloved woman. Nāgadatta, it is said, could not renounce his great love for his wife, after she went with the king, and consequently he lost his mind and was reborn as a lower existence, whereas king Vikramayaśa was reborn as a god.<sup>161</sup>

Coming back to the conversion of Śāli, who experienced *vairāgya* 'by seeing the king'. In this case, too, I would argue that the potential experience of the ambiguity of the imagery of the king is (a) produced by the story itself, and (b) has all the qualities of a symbolic renunciation<sup>162</sup> of the desire of becoming a king-like personality, as a way of spiritual progress.

(a) Śāli's conversion experience itself has been explained by Bloomfield<sup>163</sup> with reference to the homonym of *Śreṇika: krayāṇaka* (any purchasable object). The implicature of this intentionally ambiguous play on words (*śleṣa*) is obvious: the king is suddenly experienced not anymore as the incarnation of the ultimate social value, but as a human being like anybody else and, therefore, as exchangeable – like a commodity.<sup>164</sup> Thus, for Śāli king Śreṇika all of a sudden turned into a 'weak bull', that is, a deficient human manifestation of ideal kingship, as represented by the Jina according to the text. Only the previous episodes make intelligible why Śāli actually developed the internal disposition to suddenly experiencing *vairāgya*: The text suggests the rather profane experience of disappointment with royal splendour in reaction to the 'royal serpent's' act of transgressing the social boundaries (between politics and economics), and forcing his

<sup>160</sup> Cf. E. Husserl, *Cartesianische Meditationen* (Hamburg, 1932/1987): 37; Iser, "The Reading Process", 299.

<sup>161</sup> SKC, p. 90.

<sup>162</sup> The term 'self-sacrifice' would not be in line with Jain thinking.

<sup>163</sup> Bloomfield, "Śālibhadra Carita", 274, n. 49.

<sup>164</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 274f.

entry into Śāli's house (in order to plunder its riches).<sup>165</sup> Śāli became disgusted with the world, because he identified himself with the king (kingship) – as the supreme embodiment of worldly value – who was now suddenly experienced as a paradoxical, both glamorous and violent personality with bad human breath, which cannot be a valid object of identification anymore: “The king (*rājan*) has turned out to be the king-disease (*rājamandya*).”

(b) In addition to Bloomfield's analysis of the various rhetorical metaphors I suggest a sociological interpretation of the motif of the ‘kings-disease’ in this story, which I regard as a link between a purely doctrinal interpretation of this conversion story and implied social interpretations. The central motif of this part of the story concerns the social consequence of Śāli's ‘conversion’ – the non-identification with the king. The conversion experience can be characterised as the sudden reversal of a predominantly outward orientation towards worldly objects/personalities (e.g. the king) to an inward orientation toward the immortality of the soul (*jīva*). As a consequence of this reversal of perspectives, the personality of the visible king is perceived merely indirectly, as a karmic pollutant of the essential translucidity of the invisible inner soul, which now appears as the ‘true’ king. The reversal of perspectives thus implies a devaluation of the external world and its encompassment by the inner soul (i.e. the point from which perception is perceived).

It is, therefore, not surprising, that Śāli suddenly perceives king Śreṇika not anymore as the incarnation of social value and as an object of identification and worship, but as source of contamination and disease. Now, the king appears not anymore as the remedy but as the source of *scrofula*, a skin disease which was called the kings-disease not only in India, because it apparently could be healed by the ‘royal touch’ of a ‘true’ king.<sup>166</sup> The king appears as a negative ‘in-

<sup>165</sup> *Ib.*, p. 277.

<sup>166</sup> M. L. B. Bloch, *The Royal Touch: Sacred Monarchy and Scrofula in England and France* (London, 1973); S. Wheeler, “Medicine in Art: Henry IV of France Touching for Scrofula, by Pierre Firens”, *Journal of the History of Medicine and Allied Sciences* 58, 1 (2003): 79–81. See AK<sub>2</sub> p. 30. See also P. Dundas, “Somnolent Sūtras: Scriptural Commentary in Śvetāmbara Jainism”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 24 (1996): 81f. on Prabhācandra's story of Abhayadeva's skin disease as “punishment for his incorrect interpretation of the scriptures”, and on Jinapāla's (KG) report that Sarasvati said “that the disease which he had contracted could be cured by remedying the “defects (in the understanding of) the nine sūtras” (ib., p. 81); also SKC, in Jacobi, *Sanatkumāracaritam*, 100f.; Kulkarni, *Treasury of Tales*, 33f., and the princes Kaṇḍarīka and Puṇḍarīka. The common motif is the link between “physical cure and

fluence', and his 'life-giving' breath seems dangerous and possessive:

"That influence which is spat out (left-behind) by licentious king-demons must be avoided like eating by night' ... 'That crow, "possession by the king", making noise on high, surely bodes misfortune as it touches my head'.<sup>167</sup>

I interpret this perception as a rejection of the once attractive illusions, *māyā*, of the 'hierarchical' system which now appear as a dangerous, 'demonic' form of 'spiritual rhetoric' which can be possessive and all-encompassing. Being symbolically incorporated (consumed: *rājakṣma*) by the king (through the giving of gifts, etc.) does not anymore appear as a privilege but as a disaster for an inward-looking, spiritually independent person: Śāli, like a Jain ascetic,<sup>168</sup> "regards the king's favours as degradation, whereas others would be delighted in being his slaves: his soul and body are alike afflicted by him".<sup>169</sup> The attractive illusion of royal pomp is thus destroyed by the real experience of royal violence, and Śreṇika appears not anymore as a sacred being but as a human amongst others: In Śāli's eyes, Śreṇika transformed into a 'weak bull', a deficient manifestation of the admired principle of kingship.

It would seem that the reflective orientation towards the own soul and the resulting non-identification and distance towards the world enables a practicing 'Jain' to discriminate between 'essence and appearance', between person and position, and particularly between himself and others, and calculate mutual [social] influences in *karmic* terms.<sup>170</sup> The ability to discriminate between *karman* and *jīva* is crucial for arresting the influx of *karman*, and thus should be constantly trained, for instance by practicing the twelve reflections (*anuprekṣā*), daily *pratikramaṇas*, or other ascetic *cum* meditative exercises associated with *saṃvega*.<sup>171</sup> This practical knowledge can then be used for purely soteriological purposes or applied to social contexts as well. It can be used not only defensively but also in order to exert one's own influence in a measured way. This brings me to the potential social implications of stories such as this one.

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retrieval of scriptural meaning" (ib., p. 82).

<sup>167</sup> Bloomfield, "Śālibhadra Carita", 280.

<sup>168</sup> Cf. ĀS 2.1.3.10.

<sup>169</sup> Bloomfield, "Śālibhadra Carita", 280

<sup>170</sup> The analogy between *karmic* influx (*āsrava*) and social influence through the generation of attachment has been indicated by W. Schubring, *Die Lehre der Jainas* (Berlin, 1935): §84.

<sup>171</sup> Schubring, *Lehre*, § 175.

#### 2.1.4 Social Implications

I argue that the sharp sense of discrimination between inside and outside which is mandatory for the practice of Jainism, and the resulting possibility to reverse perspectives represents a form of competence<sup>172</sup> which can be instrumentalized, for instance by subordinate, educated elites, such as the Indian *baniyās*, to liberate them from the ideological hegemony of the all-encompassing image of sacred kingship fostered by the medieval Hindu kings.<sup>173</sup> The ability to discriminate between different forms of ‘*karmic* influx’ enables for a more flexible, non-violent situational management of social relationships for instance with kings, that is, either identification or non-identification, engagement or distance – judging situations by means of the distinguishing criterion of the violent/non-violent aspects of individual kings.

Particularly in the political and ideological context of medieval Hindu kingdoms, it seems, Jainism proved to be ideologically useful to reduce the influence of both the holders of political power and of the dominant Hindu ideology, without openly challenging their authority, and to function as a religious focus for the self-selective constitution of influential networks with common politico-economical interests on a secondary level of social organization.<sup>174</sup> It is well attested that the fundamental rhetorical strategy of the followers of Jainism is, both in the sphere of politics and religion, to use accepted social forms of speech to some extent without identifying with them.<sup>175</sup> This exercise in social distancing promoted by religion generates, in turn, the potency to reverse or reinterpret the conventional meanings and to construct intentionally multivocal utterances by implicitly ‘violating the norm of identification’ with dominant and objective social values, such as royalty and (brāhmanical) ritualism.<sup>176</sup>

<sup>172</sup> On the term ‘Jain interactional competence’, see Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 121.

<sup>173</sup> See for instance H. C. Kulke, *Jagannatha-Kult und Gahapati-Königtum* (Wiesbaden, 1979).

<sup>174</sup> Cf. Babb, *Alchemies of Violence*, 144: “Jainism originated as a dissenting, anti-orthodox tradition”.

<sup>175</sup> Cf. Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, xix; Carrithers, *Why Do Humans Have Culture*, 292.

<sup>176</sup> A well known strategy: A. Seal, “Imperialism and Nationalism in India”, *Modern Asian Studies* 7, 3 (1973): 321–347; S. Hoerber Rudolph & L. I. Rudolph, *Essays on Rajputana: Reflections on History, Culture and Administration* (New Delhi, 1984); Haynes, *Rhetoric and Ritual*; and C. Jaffrelot, *The Hindu Nationalist Movement and Indian Politics, 1925 to the 1990s* (London, 1993/1996), and others, have investigated the paradoxical effects of the double-strategies employed by political mediators in (colonial) South Asia, which use “modern language” in the public sphere, i.e. the



The (Jain) minister's dilemma has been well characterized by the tenth century Ācārya Somadeva:

Those who are in constant fear of their lives (that is, fear the king), and have no motives of sordid gain in deliberations, are alone fit to be ministers of kings, and not those who are like blood-sucking leeches. ... Ministers are, however, faced with a dilemma. If they followed the wishes of the king, the people might be ruined; while if they acted according to the wishes of the people, they might ruin their own position.<sup>177</sup>

The combination of outward conformity with dominant social conventions and inward dissent promoted both by Jain ontology and language usage is ideally suited to the structurally based social strategies of subordinate elites such as *baniyās* (who still are the predominant supporters of Jainism) *vis à vis* dominant powers. Ideologically, it potentially strengthens the striving for independence and self-regulation amongst subordinate groups or networks, without forcing them to challenge openly the dominant and incorporative political and religious powers.<sup>178</sup> The orienting structure of religious practice, which has been characterised as “submitting yet opposing” to dominant brāhmaṇical practices,<sup>179</sup> thus, overlaps with and to some

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institutions of the state, and “traditional language” within their own community. M. Carrithers, “The Foundations of Community among Southern Digambar Jains: An Essay on Rhetoric and Experience”, in: M. Carrithers & C. Humphrey (eds.), *The Assembly of Listeners* (Cambridge): 266f. has, similarly, shown how the multivocal ‘political rhetoric’ of the leaders of Jain lay communities (*samāja*) gains persuasive force because it indirectly taps into a “diffuse realm of religious sentiments.” J. E. Cort, *Liberation and Wellbeing: A Study of the Mūrtipūjak Jains of North Gujarat*, Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1989: 449–70 suggested, conversely, that the official “religious ideology” of the Jains is indirectly reliant on a “diffuse Jain ideology of wellbeing”, and how “symbolically rich” multivalent concepts, like *lābha* or *maṅgala* (‘profit’ or ‘power’ both in the world and in the religious sphere), “bridge the two ideologies” (ib., p. 465). The merit of both approaches lies in the attempt to interpret the implicit links between the Jain religion and the politico-economic sphere in terms of a theory of symbolisation.

<sup>177</sup> *Yaśastilaka* IV, in Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka*, 102.

<sup>178</sup> On the complementary relationship of kings and merchants in the traditional Hindu social system, see L. A. Babb, *Alchemies of Violence* (New Delhi, 2004): “[O]ne consequence of the trader non-violence was that it removed the potential for competition for political authority from the relationship between traders and Rājputa, thus, making possible a complementation of roles that has been historically fruitful for both parties. This complementation was reflected in the ritual sphere” (p. 218f.).

<sup>179</sup> R. S. Gandhi, “The Rise of Jainism and its Adoption by the Vaisyas of India: A Case Study in Sanskritisation and Status Mobility”, *Social Compass* 24, 2–3 (1977): 248. Cf. Flügel, “Power and Insight”, 127f.

extent constitutes the general orientation of strategic groups.<sup>180</sup>

In the *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*, for instance, a king characterises a merchant as “a tiger with a face of a deer, outwardly simple, but inwardly perfidious.”<sup>181</sup> The *Yaśastilaka* is even more explicit:

Thy minister appears in an endless variety of roles. He is himself creator and destroyer both. He is himself the speaker and the poet, the dancer and the clown! (3.225)

None there is who is not deceived by these ministers, as the fishes are by the cranes. They are immaculate in outward appearance and dress, walk slowly, and cast steadfast glances. A pretence of honesty is their asset, and they are trained in their inmost hearts in the art of deception (3.191). ... Who is not supremely delighted by their outward deportment? But, methinks, they have no pity in their hearts even for their others (3.193).<sup>182</sup>

These characterisations reveal the same motif of ‘disguise’, although the evaluation is (understandably from the king’s perspective) reversed.<sup>183</sup> The self-perception of the Jains manifests the same structure but reverse evaluation. Jains ask themselves: “how to regulate our lives, so as to mix in the world, yet not imbibe its evil ourselves”.<sup>184</sup>

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<sup>180</sup> For the application of the concept of ‘strategic group’, a quasi-group, to the sociology of Asia, see H.-D. Evers, “Group Conflict and Class Formation in South-East Asia”, in: H.-D. Evers (ed.), *Modernization in South-East Asia* (Singapore, 1973): 108–131; H.-D. Evers & S. Gerke, *Knowledge is Power: Experts as Strategic Group* (Bonn, 2005): 4f.: “The concept of the strategic group stands out from that of the social class and the elite; it postulates the vertical networking of persons beyond their social level and their social class. ... Such a strategic group defines itself through a common interest in maintaining, or if necessary, expanding the resources that will ensure the functioning of the entire complex of the strategic group, but does not necessarily imply the existence of specific links through interactions”.

<sup>181</sup> Tawney, *Kathākośa*, 92.

<sup>182</sup> Handiqui, *Yaśastilaka*, 156.

<sup>183</sup> On proverbs of subaltern groups in India critical of Jain merchants, see D. Hardiman, *Feeding the Baniya: Peasants and Usurers in Western India* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1996). The emphasis on non-violence and the dietary rules of Jainism do not harmonize with the social practices of both the lower castes and the *ṣatriyas*.

<sup>184</sup> C.R. Jain, *What is Jainism? Essays and Addresses* (Allahabad, 1928?): 136. Jainism can also be very useful for social intermediaries, which need to be able to interact with members of all castes and classes, in order to establish the implicit links of functional interdependence between hierarchically differentiated, hereditary social classes which do not officially interact with each other in ritual contexts, without the mediation of the *brāhmaṇs*, which formed the apex of the system. *Baniyās* controlled the economic, (particularly the monetary) transactions within the socio-religious system. They underwent the increased risk of pollution, because of the multiplication

The practical usefulness of a differentiation between inward and outward orientations – which allows for the reversal of perspectives, separation, pluralism, and selectivity (which are all typical strategies of subordinate or minority groups) – has been demonstrated most clearly by Bayly's<sup>185</sup> analysis of the *baniyā* mentality in pre-modern North India. In practice, his analysis indicates, members of service castes of high status, like the *baniyās*, were often totally dependent on royal support for their survival and for social status as well. Their only chance to gain independence relative to the king, was the maintenance of an inter-regional network of family and business contacts, which generated the possibility of physical withdrawal from a 'bad' king. The need for the maintenance of potential geographical mobility explains the characteristic refusal of *baniyās* to become landowners. There was, however, a constant temptation, and in certain circumstances necessity, for a rich merchant to imitate royal habits and establishing himself as a 'little king' (or a 'great *sāhū*'), though liberal spending of wealth and living in great palaces, but it is also apparent, that such behaviour is ultimately destructive of mercantile credit, and might attract kings and thieves. Jain stories, therefore, project the image of the 'frugal merchant', who "stands somewhere between the 'great *sāhū*' and the despised miser figure"<sup>186</sup> as the appropriate social ideal: "The frugal merchant avoids expense and luxury, inhabits a modest house and uses his adequate wealth to establish relations with learned men and priests".<sup>187</sup> He, maintains a difficult balance between the opposing temptations of 'misery and royal splendour':

The area of the greatest and most pervasive social risk, however, was for Hindus, like Jains, the boundary between the inward, frugal life of the merchant and the kingly manner which involved constant giving and receiving. Merchant families might find themselves trapped in the limbo between these two styles of life, unable to command the power and

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of transactions across social boundaries, and "there was constant pressure to withdraw from relationships or trades which might be considered harmful" (Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, 386). The increased concern with problems of purification and the lingering threat of a loss of status lead to the gradual disappearance of the distinction between bad moral and bad economic conduct amongst *baniyās* (ib., p. 385) and stimulated their interest in the teachings of the 'dirty' Jain ascetics, who denied the efficacy of external pollution, in favour of a state of mental indifference.

<sup>185</sup> Bayly, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, 382.

<sup>186</sup> Ib., p. 383.

<sup>187</sup> Ib.

respect of the ruler yet 'expensive' enough to forfeit credit in the mercantile sphere. For merchants necessarily became involved with political power. ... The service or succour of kings which was enjoined in the law books was constantly reiterated as a goal in merchant family histories. It involved the giving and getting of political honour and tied them yet more closely into durbars.<sup>188</sup>

The characteristic solution of this structurally induced conflict between two 'models of behavior', typically encountered by members of all high ranking office holders, was, according to Bayly, the maintenance of "a sharper distinction between inward and outward style of life".<sup>189</sup> The tension of inward asceticism and self-denial and lavish public display, which appears also in the religious practices of merchants (in Bayly's view there is not much difference between both realms) is thus solved through a radical differentiation between two hierarchically ranked modes of orientation.<sup>190</sup>

This internal differentiation of roles and corresponding personality-structures, and the possibility of role reversal which it generates, seems to be typical for all subordinate elite groups, which are deprived from access to political power. The orientation towards Jainism can (on secondary levels) add a heightened intellectual awareness and control of this situation. The social use of Jain categories may, thus, articulate dissent (independence) in a symbolic, non-violent, and possibly unnoticed form, and 'conquer' the dominant ideology of sacrifice and kingship by reversing internally the order of precedence between the 'hierarchical' values of kingship and Brāhmaṇism on the one hand and of baniyāship and Jainism on the other. But the social implications are not determined by doctrine. They have to be worked out situationally by those who are attracted to this path.

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<sup>188</sup> *Ib.*, p. 387.

<sup>189</sup> *Ib.*

<sup>190</sup> Bayly's, *Rulers, Townsmen and Bazaars*, thesis is superior to M. Marriott's, "Hindu Transactions: Diversity without Dualism", in: B. Kapferer (ed.), *Transaction and Meaning* (Philadelphia, 1976): 109–142, because it does not reduce merchant's behaviour to the single strategy of 'minimal transactions', which, being derived from an analysis of ritual transactions of cooked food in rural contexts alone, does not account of merchants economic activities and their enormous public expenditures. Otherwise merchants would not appear as minimal transactors (*ib.*, p. 135). For criticism of his equation of religious status and monetary credit, see P. Flügel, "The Ritual Circle of the Terāpanth Śvetāmbara Jains", *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes* 13 (1995–1996): 156.

### 2.1.5 Jainism, the Essence of Śaivism

What about the structural relationships between Jainism and Śaivism, the preferred religion of the Rājapūts? The pattern seems similar. By worshipping the Jina, as the ideal, unambiguously non-violent king, Jain *baniyās* were able to ideologically encompass the image of the ideal Hindu king, who, like Śiva, displayed ambiguous ‘benevolent and malevolent’ features, and whose incalculable behaviour was admired and feared at the same time.<sup>191</sup> On secondary levels, violence, as a fact of life, had to be accommodated nevertheless, as it is expressed in the classical iconographic representation of the Jina, always accompanied by two small *yakṣas* at his feet. In this image, the hierarchical relationship between the dominant value of absolute non-violence and the subordinate value of dual ‘violent/non-violent’ features is aptly expressed.

By identifying with the Jina, representing the universal attributes of all ‘souls’ of living beings, their followers may become aware of the difference between the essentially non-violent ‘ideal’ king and the ‘appearing’ ambiguous king (or living being in general) whose violent features can be rejected as ‘karmic illusions’. In short: the use of Jain doctrine allowed to discriminate and to identify only with the ‘good’, non-violent aspects of the king, and to reject the ‘bad’, violent ones. The main potential social function of the Jain doctrine is to stimulate discriminative behaviour and selectivity (most importantly within the listening king himself).<sup>192</sup>

The mapping of the Jain conception of the Jina on to the iconographic features of the Hindu king – or his favourite god at the time: Śiva – enables the discrimination between the universal, true and acceptable features, and the negative, violent ones which have to be ignored, because they generate bad *karman*. This discriminating re-evaluation of various aspects of a personality is symbolized in the frequently employed motif of the Jina image rising out of a splitting

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<sup>191</sup> References to emic perceptions of analogies between kings and Śiva and their common ambiguous characteristics can be found for instance in: R. Inden, “Hierarchies of Kings in Early Medieval India”, *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (N.S.) 20, 1 (1986): 119; K. Veluthat, “Royalty and Divinity: Legitimation of Monarchical Power in South India”, *39<sup>th</sup> Session of the Indian History Congress, Hyderabad* (1978): 243, 245; S. B. Deo, *History of Jaina Monasticism from Inscriptions and Literature* (Vol. 16, Poona, 1956): 111ff., 121, 126, 134, 136.

<sup>192</sup> H. v. Glasenapp, *Der Jainismus: Eine indische Erlösungsreligion* (Hildesheim, 1925/1964): 425 quotes ascetic talk about the Jain doctrine, “welche wie ein Donnerkeil den Berg des Saṅsāra zerspaltet”.

*Śivaliṅgam* (at least in the eyes of the beholder).<sup>193</sup> Similarly – in contrast to the image of the Jina, who has discarded all his karmic fetters – the outer image of the king may to a convert such as Śālibhadra not anymore as a perfect model of humanity, as it is conventionally presented, but, on the contrary, as a disease: as the *karmic* influx of royal influence, *āsrava*, into the purity of the inner “soul”, that is, as the king’s disease, *rājamanja*. Not the worldly king, but the inner ‘soul’, or its iconographic model: the Jina, is now seen as the true ‘king’.<sup>194</sup> The image of the king is thus ‘split’ – like the one of Śiva – with the help of the Jain doctrine into essence and appearance; an act which expresses by means of a visual image the transformation undergone by an individual through conversion to Jainism.

## 2.2 The Conversion of the Merchant Banārasīdās

A brief glance at the description of the ‘conversion’ of the seventeenth century merchant and mystic Banārasīdās from Śaivism (the religion of the kings) to Jainism (the religion of his ancestors) in the *Ardhakathānaka* shall, finally, help to illustrate the pervasiveness of conceptions like those implicit in the *Śālibhadracarita*. There are two episodes in this famous so-called first Indian ‘autobiography’ which relate to this point.<sup>195</sup> The first episode shows Banārasī unsuccessfully trying to finance his love for courtesans/prostitutes by asking Śiva for miraculous intervention:<sup>196</sup>

<sup>193</sup> Cf. Maṇḍiṃya, in Jacobi, *Ausgewählte Erzählungen*, 66; Granoff, “Biographies of Siddhasena”. On the motif of the splitting *liṅga*, see also Granoff (unpublished manuscript, 9–13).

<sup>194</sup> See Kapferer, *Celebration of Demons*, 12, on Śrī Laṅkā, where the renouncer is presented as the ideal Buddhist king.

<sup>195</sup> On the genre of autobiography, see H. S. Srivastava, “Historical Biographies in Hindi Literature”, in: S. P. Sen (ed.), *Historical Biography in Indian Literature* (Calcutta, 1979): 127–139; H. Leitner, *Lebenslauf und Identität: Die kulturelle Konstruktion von Zeit in der Biographie* (Frankfurt/M., 1982) with analyses of Jaina biography; A. Dihle, *Die Entstehung der historischen Biographie* (Heidelberg, 1987); D. Arnold & S. Blackburn (eds.), *Telling Lives in India: Biography, Autobiography, and Life History* (Bloomington, 2004). On modern autobiographies, see N. Balbir, “Autobiographies of Jain Monks and Nuns in the 20th Century: A Preliminary Essay”, in: C. Caillat & N. Balbir (eds.), *Jaina Studies* (Delhi, 2008): 143–179.

<sup>196</sup> See AK<sub>1,3</sub>. The principal edition is N. Premi (ed.), *Ardhakathānak*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Bambai, 1957). For convenience, I paraphrase M. Lath’s, *Half a Tale: A Study in the Interrelationship between Autobiography and History. The Ardhakathānaka, Translated, Introduced and Annotated* (Jaipur, 1981): 30ff. (AK<sub>2</sub>) English rendition of the text, which will soon be replaced by the forthcoming new English translation by

*Episode 1*

Having recognized the ultimate worthlessness of material wealth, in his youth Banārasī was only concerned with poetry, gambling and courtesans instead of working in the family business and to earn his own money. This was against the advice of his father, who said: “Give up your foolish pursuit of learning, since learning is only for brāhmaṇs and bards. A merchant’s son should tend shop. Do not forget that a man who is too studious has to beg for his food”.<sup>197</sup> Banārasī, however, who lived on the earnings of his father, continued to follow his passions despite a disgusting skin-disease, which he caught as a consequence of his sinful activities. Instead of working, he tried to make up for the enormous cost of his lifestyle by worshipping Śiva and praying for his miraculous intervention. First he sought the advice of a *saṃnyāsīn*, who made a fool of him with a ‘magic mantra’ whose daily recitation would supposedly turn into a source of great riches. Because this did not work, Banārasī realised: “My greed had led me to grief”.<sup>198</sup> Later, a false yogi gave him a small conch-shell with an assortment of articles used in the ritual worship of a deity and assured him that the conch-shell was the true image of Lord Śiva himself. He who worshipped it would surely attain Śiva’s divine abode: “I religiously carried the conch-shell idol with me ... A shell for an idol, I, too, had become an empty shell, a living example of a devotee who was one with his god!”<sup>199</sup>

*Episode 2*

In 1605 king Akbar breathed his last in Agra. People suddenly felt orphaned and insecure without their ruler. Terror raged everywhere. The hearts of men trembled with apprehension. Their faces became drained of colour. When he heard of Akbar’s demise, Banārasī was sitting on a flight of stairs in his house. The news of his death came as a sharp and sudden blow. It made him shake with violent, uncon-

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R. Chowdhury (Caudharī), *Ardhakathānak: A Half Story, by Banarasidas* (New Delhi, in press) (AK<sub>4</sub>) based on the already published translation into modern Hindī by R. Caudharī, *Ardhakathānaka* by Banārasīdās. Hindī Anuvāda (Nāī Dillī, 2007) (AK<sub>3</sub>). See also R. K. Jain, *Kavivar Banārasīdās: Jīvan aur Kṛtitva* (Nāī Dillī, 1966); R. C. Sharma, “The Ardha-Kathānak. A Neglected Source of Mughal History”, *Indica* 7 (1970): 49–73, 106–120; R. Snell, “Confessions of a 17<sup>th</sup>-Century Jain Merchant: The *Ardhakathānak* of Banārasīdās”, *South Asia Research* 25 (2005): 79–104.

<sup>197</sup> Lath, *Half a Tale*, 33.

<sup>198</sup> *Ib.*, p. 34.

<sup>199</sup> *Ib.*, p. 37.

trollable agitation. He reeled, and losing his balance, fell down the stairs in a faint. His head hit a stone floor and began to bleed profusely, turning the courtyard red.<sup>200</sup>

Ten days later, Akbar's eldest son had been enthroned as Sultan Jahangir and the situation in Agra returned to normal. One day, soon after these events, Banārasī went alone to his room under the roof-top of the house and sat down to think and reflect. "I have been an ardent devotee of Śiva,' I said to myself, 'but when I fell down the stairs and was seriously hurt, Śiva did not come to my aid' – This thought nagged me constantly and made me neglect my daily ritual to Śiva. My heart was no longer in it, and one day I simply put the Śiva-conch away".<sup>201</sup> My father was glad to hear the news. "Perhaps this is a sign that my son is undergoing a real change for the better," he happily remarked, "there is yet hope for the future of the family. And, truly, a remarkable change was coming over me. I was like a man transformed. My mind was turning to moral and righteous thoughts. I sincerely began trying to become a religious man in the true sense of the word".<sup>202</sup>

The elements of this 'autobiographic' narrative can be interpreted in similar ways as those of the *Śālibhadracarita*. The identification with royal virtues and indulgence in aristocratic pastimes, such as enjoying courtesans, poems, and generally not working, brought Banārasīdās the king's disease. And the worship of Śiva, the god of the kings, had transformed him "in an empty shell, a living example of a devotee who was one with his god".<sup>203</sup> The illusory state which led him to neglect his own worldly and religious interests (symbolized by his father, wife, and Jainism) lasted as long as the life of Akbar, the king. Only when the king died and terror and violence erupted did Banārasī 'fall on his head' and realised his misidentification: "when I fell down the stairs and was seriously hurt, Śiva did not come to my aid".<sup>204</sup>

The narrative is carefully constructed and uses most of the conventional devices of 'Jain rhetoric': the generation of insight via retro-

<sup>200</sup> *Ib.*, p. 39.

<sup>201</sup> *Ib.*, p. 40. In the Original:

*eka divasa bānārasidāsa, ekākī ūpara āvāsa |*  
*baiṭhyau mana maiṃ cintai ema, maiṃ siva-pūjā kīnī kema || 262 ||*  
*jaba maiṃ giriyau paryau murachāi, taba siva kichū na karī sahāi |*  
*yahu bicāri siva-pūjā tajī, lakhī pragaṭa sevā maiṃ kajī || 263 || (AK<sub>1</sub> 262f.)*

<sup>202</sup> Lath, *Half a Tale*, 40f.

<sup>203</sup> *Ib.*, p. 37.

<sup>204</sup> *Ib.*, p. 40.



spection, the deconstruction of illusion through juxtaposition with the reality of violence and pain, the motif of disguise, the parallelism between kingship and Śaivism, etc. The dominant idea is here, as in the *Śālibhadracarita*, the gradual process of conversion, by turning away from the social influence of worldly kings towards the Jinās – the true kings – and to the inner soul. The secondary, beneficial material effects of this ‘religious’ strategy in business and social life is demonstrated in the remainder of the *Ardhakathānaka*.

On another level the AK can be read not as an autobiography, but as an application of the theory of the fourteen stages of the Jain path of purification (*guṇasthāna*) as laid out in Nemicandra’s *Gommaṭasāra*, which impressed Banārasīdās greatly and prompted his conversion from Śvetāmbara ritual culture to Digambara philosophy and his engagement in the mystical Adyātma circle in Āgrā.<sup>205</sup> Characterizations of the *Ardhakathānaka* as the first “personal history” in Indian literature generally overlook this important feature.<sup>206</sup>

In the final section we will now look at the way in which conversion stories, such as these, which are not mythological miracle stories but reality-near accounts, or any historical narratives, may effect real changes amongst the audience of Jain sermons.

### 3 The Conversion Process as a Social Drama

Medieval Jain conversion stories have a predominately didactic purpose and are still used by today’s ascetics to motivate their audience to translate some of the general strategies for non-violent action, whose benevolent effects for an improvement of one’s life, rebirth, and future salvation are demonstrated in the texts, into their everyday life. Story-telling, in concordance with the general Jain attitude, does not put any direct pressure upon the listener to convert to Jainism. The audience is always free to choose, and to draw its own conclusions. Jain ascetics, nevertheless, use rhetorical devices in order to narrow down interpretational options, to defamiliarize and to confront the audience with paradoxical meanings in order to trigger effects of insight and behavioural change. The prime rhetorical device

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<sup>205</sup> See also P. Granoff, “This Was My Life: Autobiographical Narrative and Renunciation in Medieval Jainism”, *Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute* 75 (1994): 37.

<sup>206</sup> B. Vanina, “The *Ardhakathānaka* by Banarasi Das: A Socio-Cultural Study”, *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Series 3*, vol. 5, 2 (1995): 221f.

is the plot itself, which invariably involves a description of often violent external and internal conflicts which end in renunciations. These stories about conflicts convince through the narration of practical examples, close to real-life situations, that non-violence might be a viable practical strategy for anybody who is confronted with similar situations, as the heroes of the narratives are.

More important than the rhetorical devices of narratives are, however, the implicit social strategies of ascetics who are aiming to ‘attract’ (not: ‘to convert’) following through long-term strategies, ideally culminating in the administration of vows and eventual initiation in a monastic order. Conversion is perceived as a gradual process over a long period. The seeds for the gradual process of adaptation of Jainism are intentionally sown by the ascetics through the dissemination of popular stories with only minimal religious content. The preparatory process ideally ends with the official conversion to Jainism through the acceptance of the *śrāvaka vratas* and concludes with the monastic initiation, *dīkṣā*, and the induction in the systematic study of the scriptures, *āgama*, beginning with monastic rules and regulations. There is, in other words, a hierarchical “correlation between types of scriptures and types of personalities”.<sup>207</sup> Jain stories are seen by their authors merely as the points of entry into the process of ‘purification’, as outlined by the *guṇasthāna* model of the fourteen stages of purification, and its corresponding classification of the ideal social hierarchy of laity, mendicants, and arhats.

The process of individual ‘conversion’ is, as a rule, a consequence of processes of cumulative interaction between the Jain ascetics and their literature with their wider social environment. To be ‘born as a Jain’ might facilitate access to information about Jainism, but, as we can still observe today, there is no principle difference between the process of conversion of a ‘non-Jain’ and a ‘born Jain’, who might suddenly gain an insight into the truth of Jainism, quite distinct from a mere nominal adherence to Jain-principles.

P. S. Jaini<sup>208</sup> summarized the main features of this process of the ‘first awakening’, *saṃvega*, from the point of view of Jain scholasticism, which explains this process in terms of the internal functions of the suppression of *karman*, etc., for the individuals

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<sup>207</sup> D. S. Lopez, “Introduction”, in: D. S. Lopez (ed.), *Buddhist Hermeneutics* (Honolulu, 1992): 6.

<sup>208</sup> Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 134–56.

concerned.<sup>209</sup> Jainism's attempt to explain its own impact onto a 'receptive soul' in terms of Jain ontology inevitably leads into paradox, as Jaini does not fail to note.<sup>210</sup>

From an observers' point of view, it is possible to generate further information by investigating the effective conditions of acceptability of Jainism – representing one ideological system amongst many – and the methods of its dissemination and incorporation through a series of public rituals and conversion experiences.<sup>211</sup> An external observer can achieve this, for instance, (a) through the investigation of the rhetoric of public speech and textual argument, which the ascetics employ in order to disseminate the Jain doctrine as medium of self-attribution, and (b) in taking into account evidence of actual conversion experiences.

Victor Turner regarded the latter point as crucial. It is not enough, he maintained, to investigate only the linguistic and or psychological processes involved in conversion but it is necessary to additionally investigate the way in which narratives and other genres of cultural performance are dialectically interrelated with wider social processes.<sup>212</sup> Turner is particularly interested in the role which narratives play as forms of 'redressive action' in the context of certain situations of social conflict which he calls 'social dramas'. I see Turner's insights as fundamental for the analysis of the social implications of the role of narratives within the conversion process, and will use the concept of 'social drama' as context in which the presentation of a 'narrative drama' may elicit pragmatic effects. Turner observes that situations of social crisis 'within groups of persons who share values and interests and who have an alleged common history', reveal typical sequential patterns of conflict evolution and resolution. These situational patterns or 'social dramas' he investigated in terms of a developmental model comprising four stages:

- (1) breach,
- (2) crisis,
- (3) redress,
- (4) reintegration or recognition of schisms.

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<sup>209</sup> *Ib.*, p. 147.

<sup>210</sup> *Ib.*, p. 141.

<sup>211</sup> On Jain conversion experiences, see P. Flügel, *Askese und Devotion: Das rituelle System der Terāpanth Śvetāmbara Jains*, Doctoral dissertation, Johannes Gutenberg-Universität Mainz, 1994, ch. 5 ("Jain-Entsagung als literarisches Motiv").

<sup>212</sup> Turner, "Social Dramas", 153.

Social dramas usually start with an unintentional or calculated breach of a norm as an expression of deeper divisions of interests. Violations of norms inevitably lead to a crisis within a group. If the crisis is big enough it will lead to the formation of factions (which may coincide with what Turner calls ‘dominant cleavages’) and eventually generate pressure to take sides. According to Turner, it is the moment of crisis which exposes the pattern of factional struggles, and makes visible ‘basic social structures’ as well as ‘real’ common interests and power. In order to limit any further spread of the social crisis ‘redressive action’ is taken. This may include for instance advice, informal or formal arbitration, or ritual (often: sacrifice). Rebellions and revolutions are also counted as forms of redressive action which might help solving the crisis. As a result of either the success or the failure of redressive action either a reintegration of the group materialises or recognition of irreparable breach, which in turn leads to schism.<sup>213</sup> The main form of ‘redressive action’ in the so called ‘liminal phase’ are narratives, speeches and rituals, which all serve to negotiate a consensual social definition of the conflict, thereby providing it “with a rhetoric, a mode of emplotment and a meaning”.<sup>214</sup> Politeness strategies are also forms of ‘redressive action’, as Brown and Levinson have stressed.<sup>215</sup>

For our purpose, the most interesting aspect of this well-known model concerns the intrinsic relationship between conflict and redressive action. In fact, without a conflict at hand, narratives and rhetorical references to a common history etc. would not have much pragmatic relevance. But under these exceptional conditions, they play an important role as limiting devices in the face of threatening social entropy. Redressive action is thus socially relevant only under conditions of crisis.

The same, I argue, is the case with Jain conversion stories, whose social effectiveness is predicated on the experience of conflict and suffering on the part of individual members of the audience. Between hearing the first Jain story and actual experiences of insight and expression of religious commitment in reaction to a psychological crisis may be a long period of ‘incubation’, a fact on which the Jain method of teaching in form of stories plays deliberately. From an external observer’s point of view, one can distinguish four stages in Jain models of the long-term conversion process, here represented by

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<sup>213</sup> *Ib.*, pp. 150f.

<sup>214</sup> *Ib.*, p. 156.

<sup>215</sup> Brown & Levinson, “Politeness”, 74.

the authoritative summary of P. S. Jaini,<sup>216</sup> that are similar to Turner's model of the social drama:

- (1) preparation and incubation,
- (2) experience of conflict,
- (3) insight, and
- (4) renunciation.<sup>217</sup>

(1) The logical beginning of the process of conversion is the dissemination of general information about Jain principles and practices through Jain narrative literature (oral and written). This first stage has to prepare the ground for everything that follows. Listening to a public narration of a Jain story (either by Jain ascetics or laity) is the most attractive, and deliberately indirect, way in which such knowledge can be acquired by members of the general public, who initially may enjoy the surface plot itself more than the moral drawn at the end. The daily sermons, *pravacana*, of Jain ascetics, and the reading of Jain books are other sources of information, which, however, appeal to a more selected audience. The knowledge conveyed does not necessarily have to be complete or of any particular interest to the individuals concerned. The aim of public story-telling is merely to generate a general awareness of *hiṃsā* as a problem, while at same time offering a visible demonstration of its solution embodied in the way of life of the narrating mendicants themselves. The stage of preparation and incubation is characteristically informal, but, from the mendicants' point of view, serves as a 'seed' for all further developments.

(2) In the first stage, Jainism is experienced by the listeners as a mere set of external ideas and practices, which in the long run leave the individual personally unaffected. The actual internalisation of these ideas into the personality happens only in connection with unexpected, externally induced destabilising experiences of conflict and violence. This fact is invariably mentioned by Jain ascetics as fundamental for the initial conversion experience. The examples of Jain conversion stories above illustrate this point. Doctrinally, insight into the truth of Jainism can be experienced (a) indirectly, through the word of the Jina (and the ascetics), and (b) directly, after disenchant-

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<sup>216</sup> See footnote 192.

<sup>217</sup> These stages show formal similarities to G. Wallas', *The Art of Thought* (London, 1926) famous 'four stages of the creative process': (1) preparation, (2) incubation, (3) insight, (4) verification. Ingrid Schoon made me aware of this.

ment through experiences of conflict, loss, and suffering, which often function as an impetus for a experiences of insight or conversion:

Actually a very wide range of experiences, such as the loss of a beloved one, or the sight of extreme suffering, can serve as ‘instruction’, exerting a profoundly awakening effect upon the receptive soul.<sup>218</sup>

Thus, in retrospective (and only then!), violence and conflict appear to have been played a positive role in being instrumental for triggering experiences of insight into the truth of the Jain principles. What experiences of violence and suffering may initially provoke is the desire and need for understanding their causes. In such a situation, half-forgotten Jain stories about similar experiences in the lives of cultural heroes and their paradigmatic realisation of the truth of the Jain theory of *karman* and of the soteriological value of non-violence may come to mind, and might trigger sudden feelings of an intrinsic connection between the abstract teachings of Jainism and personal experiences. This, at least, is the theory underlying the practices of contemporary Jain mendicants. The necessity of a merging of doctrine and experience is stressed, amongst others, by Ācārya Tulsī who asserts that Jainism teaches “that a real must be posited as what it is felt to be”.<sup>219</sup> With Dilthey, it can be said that conversion stories may be instrumental in transforming the somewhat amorphous lived experience (*Erlebnis*) of the listener into reflected experience (*Erfahrung*) interpreted in the light of Jain doctrine.<sup>220</sup>

Because the experience of conflict and suffering is considered potentially instrumental for conversion in Jain literature, as is the severing of social links at the moment of initiation, the word of the Jina and of his disciples imply an element of violence as well; as Ruegg<sup>221</sup> posited, who coined the term ‘salvific violence’ regarding Buddhist doctrine. It is a carefully calculated form of violence to end all violence, intended to destroy the common sense view of, and attachment to, reality in order to generate insight into ‘the’ truth of the transcendental point of view.<sup>222</sup>

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<sup>218</sup> Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 143.

<sup>219</sup> Ācārya Tulsī, *Illumination of Jaina Tenets* (Ladnun, 1985): 188.

<sup>220</sup> V. W. Turner, “Dewey, Dilthey, and Drama”, in: V. W. Turner & E. M. Bruner (eds.), *The Anthropology of Experience* (Urbana/Chicago), 1986: 35 translates Dilthey’s terms *Erlebnis* and *Erfahrung*, which have no equivalent in English, as “mere experience” and “an experience”.

<sup>221</sup> Ruegg, “Purport, Implicature and Presupposition”, 317.

<sup>222</sup> Cf. Eliade, *Yoga*, 259.

(3) According to both Jain scriptures and contemporary mendicants, connecting knowledge and experience might evoke temporary experiences of a direct discriminating insight, *samyag-darśana*, into the true nature of *jīva* as being different from *ajīva*. This experience marks the ‘awakening’ or ‘conversion’, *pratibodha*, and the re-direction of the dominant orientation from the body and outward influences toward the inner soul, *svabhava*.<sup>223</sup> However, none of the Jain mendicants I interviewed ever claimed to have experienced their soul directly, only a handful of lay followers of the modern Jain mystics Śrīmad Rājacandra, Kāñjī Svāmī and A.M. Paṭel.<sup>224</sup>

(4) An insight into the true nature of the soul is ideally followed by a longing for further instruction, and the desire for a retrospection of one’s past life in terms of the learned principles. Teaching and self-analysis in conjunction with further experiences of violence, death and suffering, strengthens the feeling of disenchantment with the world and creates internal conflict (dogmatically: between *ātman* and *karman*) whose resolution necessitates acts of progressive renunciation:<sup>225</sup>

He may at this point still lack the strength required for renunciation; nevertheless, he will never again be drawn to the world as he once was. Thus he leads a seemingly normal life, acting out ordinary societal roles, but is subject to terrific internal conflicts which must sooner or later bring him to some act of renunciation, either partial (taking the layman’s vows) or complete (taking the vows of a monk).<sup>226</sup>

The experience of perpetual internal conflict at this stage is the result of the long-term influence of the ascetics, who know that they can influence particular individuals which suffer a personal crisis, and indoctrinate them with explanatory models.<sup>227</sup> The effect of Jain stories is, according to Jain doctrine, predicated on the presence of certain external ‘activating’ conditions,<sup>228</sup> which can be empirically investigated. Of particular significance are experiences of death facilitation the realisation of the transitoriness of life, as conversion stories

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<sup>223</sup> Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 148.

<sup>224</sup> On these kindred modern Jain saints, see P. Flügel, “Present Lord: Simandhar Svami and the Akram Vijnan Movement”, in: A. S. King & J. Brockington (eds.), *The Intimate Other: Love Divine in Indic Religions* (Delhi, 2005): 210.

<sup>225</sup> Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 142–9.

<sup>226</sup> *Ib.*, p. 149.

<sup>227</sup> A good example of the way in which ascetics influence their respective audience over a long period is the episode on king Kumārapāla’s acceptance of the Jain vows from the Jain ascetic Hemaçandra in the *Prabandhacintāmaṇi*.

<sup>228</sup> Jaini, *Path of Purification*, 141.

also attempt to show. Experiences alone, however, are not sufficient for the resolution to gradually renounce the world and to ask for initiation. Only the combination of negative experiences ('crisis') and the knowledge and acceptance of meaningful interpretations ('redressive action') plus further consultation of the ascetics are seen to be capable to motivate actual renunciations.<sup>229</sup>

It does not come as a surprise, then, that the motif of taking vows and promising to perform specific religious practices is prevalent throughout Jain literature, which, in fact, is primarily concerned with illustrating and triggering the benevolent effects of vow-taking and behavioural change, whatever the surface plot of a narrative might be. Jain literature as a whole, can thus be interpreted as a rhetorical device, intentionally constructed by ascetics and devout Jain laymen to transform individual practice in the desired direction of the implementation of Jain principles. In the same way as Jain cosmology and poetic fiction, the genres of Jain history, even 'plain' chronologies, are shaped by the imperatives of religious pragmatics. In the long run, Jain literature and social practice should feed back into each other, in the sense that the retrospective interpretations of history and the depicted acts of insight, renunciation, observing vows and final liberation, which constitute the religious core of all Jain narratives, are simultaneously the ultimate intended outcome of the act of telling these stories. Through the admission of vows, ascetics command an enormous influence on their followers. In this way, given proper conditions, it might appear as if "life, after all, is as much an imitation of art as the reverse."<sup>230</sup>

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<sup>229</sup> Cf. Flügel, *Askese und Devotion*, ch. 5, and on the question of vow-taking and the role of promising ch. 3. See also L. G. Perdue, "Liminality as a Social Setting for Wisdom Instructions", *Zeitschrift für Alttestamentarische Wissenschaft* 93 (1981): 114–26; S. Shimazono, "Conversion Stories in their Popularization in Japan's New Religions", *Japanese Journal of Religious Studies* 13, 2–3 (1986): 157–175; T. Luckmann, "Kanon und Konversion", in: A. & J. Assmann (eds.), *Kanon und Zensur: Beiträge zur Archäologie der literarischen Kommunikation II* (München, 1987): 38–46; J. R. Bergmann & T. Luckmann, "Reconstructive Genres of Everyday Communication", in: U. Quasthoff (ed.), *Aspects of Oral Communication* (Berlin, 1994): 289–304. On the sociology of conversion, see L. R. Rambo, "Current Research on Religious Conversion", *Religious Studies Review* 8 (1982): 146–159; D. A. Snow & R. Machalek, "The Convert as a Social Type", in: R. Collins (ed.), *Sociological Theory* (San Francisco, 1983): 259–299; D. A. Snow & R. Machalek, "The Sociology of Conversion", *Annual Review of Sociology* 10 (1984): 167–190.

<sup>230</sup> Turner, "Social Dramas", 153.



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- KSS *Kathāsaritsāgara* by Somadeva. See Tawney, *Somadeva's Kathāsaritsāgara*.
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